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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
 Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
 Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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Let Us Fear the Censor More Than Censorship!

It seems as if Lowell Mellett, Chief of the Office of the War Information Bureau of the Motion Picture Industry, is not so responsible a public official as the office he occupies requires. Not so long ago he stated publicly that the habit of sitting three or four or more hours on one's "metaphysical fanny," with one's mind afloat in a fictional world, hardly equips the American population for the serious job of dealing with real life.

HARRISON'S REPORTS felt that a statement of this kind was not in conformance with the duties of his office and, in an editorial headed, "LOOSE TALK," published in the November 28 issue, took Mr. Mellett to task.

That the literary thrashing this paper gave Mr. Mellett for his loose and, in one phrase, vulgar talk was justified, may be evidenced by the fact that Mr. Elmer Davis, Chief of the Office of War Information, rebuked him, as you all undoubtedly know, by stating that the OWI has no opinion regarding the amusement habits of the American people, his office's job being merely to "furnish the people with factual information and what they do in their spare time is none of our concern."

It seems, however, that Mr. Mellett did not take Mr. Davis' hint and, again meddling in something he has no business to meddle, sent a letter to the producers instructing them to submit to his office all motion picture scripts, treatments and screen plays for approval before they are made into motion pictures.

The letter naturally disturbed Hollywood and, when the producers' feelings became known to the Office of War Information, Mr. Elmer Davis again rebuked Mr. Mellett by issuing a statement expressing amazement at his action. "By the widest stretch of the imagination," Mr. Davis said, "I don't know where Mellett got his authority.

"The Presidential order creating the motion picture bureau of OWI includes only morale and training films and those of the armed forces."

When Lowell Mellett realized the blunder he had committed he hastened to issue a statement by which he tried to assure the producers that he was misunderstood, calling the agitation of the industry "a tempest in a tea pot," and that it seemed to him as if the controversy had been "inspired by some one unfriendly to the motion picture industry."

Just how any one could misinterpret his letter is beyond understanding. For instance, one of the paragraphs of his letter reads as follows:

"For the benefit of both your studio and of the

Office of War Information it would be advisable to establish a routine procedure whereby our Hollywood office would receive copies of studio treatment or synopsis of all stories which you contemplate producing and finished scripts. This will enable us to make suggestions as to the war content of motion pictures at a stage when it is easy and inexpensive to make changes which may be recommended.

"We should like also to set up a routine procedure and arrangement whereby our Hollywood office may view all pictures in the long cut. While this is rather late in the operation to introduce any new matters, it would make it possible for us to recommend the deletion of any of the material which may be harmful to the war effort. . . ."

Can anyone misinterpret the meaning of these paragraphs?

Notice that Mr. Mellett did not request copies of such stories as deal with the war or with the morale of our armed forces; he requested copies of ALL stories, and demanded to view ALL pictures.

In connection with this episode, let me call your attention to part of a new item that appeared in the December 21 issue of the *Hollywood Reporter*:

"But since that time, Nelson Poynter, head of Mellett's local office, has seen fit to go from studio to studio, criticizing their efforts, asking and virtually demanding scripts for his inspection and even trying to get one or another of the studios to make a picture or pictures from ideas he would submit. . . ."

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not know what Mr. Poynter had in mind, if the *Hollywood Reporter's* statement is true, when he tried to induce studios to make pictures based on story ideas of his. But in view of the fact that inducing the producers to make stories from ideas furnished by him is not part of his duty as a representative of Mellett's office, consequently, this paper believes that Mr. Poynter had exceeded his authority.

This matter requires Congressional investigation. But since the producers feel that it would be impolite for them to request such an investigation, HARRISON'S REPORTS feels that it is up to the exhibitors to interest some Congressman to demand the airing, not only of Poynter's but also of Mellett's behavior. The industry has never declined to cooperate with the Government. Consequently, Mellett's and Poynter's conduct smack of personal censorship.

We do not fear censorship in times such as these, but let us fear the ambitious censors.

"Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon" with Basil Rathbone, Nigel Bruce and Lionel Atwill

(Universal, Feb. 12; time, 68 min.)

This second in the series of modernized "Sherlock Holmes" detective stories should satisfy the followers of this type of entertainment. As in the first picture, espionage is the theme. This time Holmes matches wits with Professor Moriarty, his old enemy, who, in the employ of the Nazis, attempts to steal a super-bombsight. With his usual amazing powers of deduction and ability to disguise himself, Holmes, as played by Basil Rathbone, outwits England's enemies, and saves her from a major catastrophe. The picture offers a substantial portion of action, and should prove to be an acceptable supporting feature:—

In Switzerland, enemy agents scheme to kidnap Dr. Franz Tobel (William Post, Jr.), inventor of a bombsight, but Sherlock Holmes (Basil Rathbone) outwits them and escapes to England with Tobel and his invention. Despite Holmes' careful precautions, Tobel disappears. Through information received from Charlotte Eberli (Kaaren Verne), Tobel's fiancée, Holmes believes that Tobel is the victim of Professor Moriarty (Lionel Atwill), who was believed to be dead. Holmes disguises himself as a dock-worker and manages to contact Moriarty. Holmes' efforts to bargain for the release of Tobel are futile. Instead, Moriarty plans to eliminate Holmes. The detective, however, is rescued by Dr. Watson (Nigel Bruce). Before his capture, Tobel had divided the bombsight in four parts, giving one part to each of four friends. He had left a coded message with Charlotte to be given to Holmes in the event he disappeared. Moriarty had stolen the message, but through a scientific process, Holmes reproduces the message from indentations on the scratch pad. Both Holmes and Moriarty successfully decode the note. When Holmes learns that three of Tobel's friends had been murdered and the parts entrusted to them stolen, he disguises himself as the fourth friend and allows Moriarty's men to capture him. At Moriarty's headquarters Holmes reveals himself and informs the professor that the missing bombsight part was safe in the hands of Scotland Yard. Moriarty admits defeat, but plans to do away with Holmes. But once again the detective is saved by the timely arrival of Dr. Watson. Moriarty escapes, but Dr. Tobel and the bombsight are saved.

Edward T. Lowe, W. Scott Darling, and Edmund L. Hartmann wrote the screen play, Howard Benedict produced it, and Roy William Neil directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Happy Go Lucky" with Mary Martin, Dick Powell, Rudy Vallee, Betty Hutton and Eddie Bracken

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 81 min.)

An enjoyable comedy with music, the type that should entertain sophisticated audiences, as well as the masses. The story presents nothing novel, and it is rather thin, but there are enough good comedy situations and tuneful musical numbers to hold one entertained consistently. The action takes place in an undisclosed Caribbean playground, and revolves around a show-girl who, posing as an heiress, contrives to ensnare a serious-minded young millionaire into matrimony, only to fall in love with her accomplice. A good deal of the comedy and dialogue is risqué. Betty Hutton is particularly good, both as a comedienne and as a singer. It is a lavish production, photographed in Technicolor:—

At a Caribbean resort, Dick Powell and Eddie Bracken manage a group of native boys, who dive for coins tossed by visiting steamer passengers. When Mary Martin seemingly drops a diamond bracelet overboard, Powell dives for it. Before returning it for a contemplated reward, Powell has the bracelet appraised. He learns that it is worthless. He arrives at Mary's hotel suite just as she informs reporters that the lost bracelet meant nothing to her, and that her wealthy father would replace it. Taking Mary aside, Powell confronts her with his information. Mary admits the fake, explaining that she was posing as an heiress in the hope of finding a rich husband. In need of money himself, Powell offers to help her. He introduces her to Rudy Vallee, a young millionaire, then draws up a plan for her conquest. But despite Powell's plan and Mary's efforts, Vallee does not propose to her. Disconsolate, Mary changes her tactics. She plans to intrigue Vallee by having him see her with a romantic young man. She selects Powell for the purpose. Meanwhile Bracken was having his romantic troubles with Betty

Hutton, Mary's girl-friend. Through a series of circumstances, Bracken obtains a love potion fluid, which arouses one's passion if sniffed. When Mary's latest plan fails to entice Vallee, Bracken squirts the love potion at him, causing him to propose immediately. Meanwhile the staged romantics between Powell and Mary had awakened their love for each other, but neither one admits to it. Complications set in when the hotel manager demands payment of Mary's overdue bill. Lest Mary be exposed, Powell asks Vallee for a loan, which is granted provided he never speaks to Mary again. Powell agrees, and sends Mary the money. Realizing her love for Powell, Mary confesses to Vallee. Although Vallee is still willing to marry her, Mary returns to Powell.

Walter DeLeon, Norman Panama, and Melvin Frank wrote the screen play, Harold Wilson produced it, and Curtis Bernhardt directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Night Plane from Chungking" with Robert Preston, Ellen Drew and Otto Kruger

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 69 min.)

A fair program espionage melodrama, with a touch of mystery. The theme has been used before; nevertheless, it holds one's attention pretty well, for the action is steady, and at times exciting. It should find favor mostly with patrons who enjoy figuring out solutions, since the identity of the spy is not divulged until toward the end. One is held in tense suspense in the closing scenes where the hero and heroine escape from the Japanese. The good direction and the competent performances overcome the hackneyed plot:—

The passengers aboard a bus en route from Chungking to India include Otto Kruger, wealthy European; Stephen Geray, a missionary; Ellen Drew, an American nurse; Madam Soo Yong, an elderly Chinese lady; Major Ernest Dorion of the French army; and Countess Tamara Geva, a White Russian. Their path is blocked by an army truck mired in the mud, just as Jap planes appear overhead. When Kruger accidentally switches on the headlights, the planes drop their bombs, killing a number of soldiers. Suspecting foul play, the soldiers escort the bus to a secret airport where Capt. Robert Preston, American pilot in the Chinese army, interrogates the passengers. He discovers the Countess to be a spy, and decides to send the others back to Chungking. Pleading a secret mission, Ellen radios a Chinese official, who orders Preston to fly the passengers to India. En route the plane is attacked by the Japs, forcing Preston to make an emergency landing in a thickly wooded section. Preston contacts Chungking by radio, and learns that among his passengers is an accomplice of the Countess. But before he can learn the spy's name, the radio breaks down. Despite his orders that no one leave the camp, the missionary disappears during the night and returns with the news that he had located a monastery nearby. All go to the monastery where Jap soldiers capture them. The missionary reveals himself as a Nazi spy, and offers to release them in exchange for the Countess. Although he knew the Countess had committed suicide, Preston stalls for time by agreeing to radio Chungking to arrange the exchange. With the aid of Dorion, who sacrifices his life, Preston overpowers the prison guard, releases Ellen and Madame Yong, and makes good their escape. Geray is killed during the fight, as is Kruger, who had turned traitor.

Earl Fenton, Theodore Reaves, and Lester Cole wrote the screen play, Walter MacEwen produced it, and Ralph Murphy directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Lady Bodyguard" with Eddie Albert and Anne Shirley

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 70 min.)

A moderately entertaining program comedy. Although the story is quite far-fetched, it offers several laughs. The action revolves around a test pilot, who finds himself insured for one million dollars instead of one thousand dollars, because of a disgruntled secretary's peeve against the insurance company's manager. The comedy situations are brought about by the efforts of a lady insurance agent to keep him out of danger, and the machinations of three beneficiaries, who seek his death. Much of the comedy is of the slapstick variety. None of the characters awaken one's sympathy, but one watches their maneuvers with an amused interest:—

As part of an insurance publicity stunt, Anne Shirley, an insurance agent, offers Eddie Albert, a test pilot, a \$1000 policy, with premiums paid up for one year. Albert agrees

to accept it if Anne would keep a date with him that evening. Anne returns to her office for the policy, unaware that a disgruntled secretary had deliberately made it out for \$1,000,000. That evening Albert takes Anne to a cheap night club owned by Maude Eburne. Miss Eburne, Edward Brophy, the bartender, and Raymond Walburn, a middle-aged actor, are made Albert's beneficiaries. After signing, Albert tries to kiss Anne, but she throws a drink at him and storms out. The following morning Donald MacBride, president of the insurance company, learns of the \$1,000,000 policy, and orders Anne to do everything possible to get it back. Despite her efforts, Albert refuses to return it. Eventually, they fall in love with each other, but Anne refuses to marry him lest people believe that she did so because of his heavy insurance. They go to MacBride who refuses to cancel the policy, because of the tremendous business his company was receiving as a result of the publicity stunt. Meanwhile the three beneficiaries feared that Anne would replace them. Learning that Anne and Albert planned to fly to Las Vegas to be married, the three put a sleeping potion in their food in the hope that Albert would fall asleep at the plane's controls. They accompany the young couple to the airport where Albert asks them to come along as witnesses. When they refuse, Albert invites them to inspect the plane, and deliberately kidnaps them. He falls asleep during the flight, and the three beneficiaries take over the controls. After an eventful ride in which anti-aircraft guns fire at the plane, Albert wakes in time to land safely. The three would-be murderers are jailed.

Edmund Hartmann and Art Arthur wrote the screen play, Sol C. Siegel and Burt Kelly produced it, and William Clemens directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Yanks Are Coming" with Maxie Rosenbloom, Henry King and Mary Healy (Producers Releasing Corp., November 9; time, 68 min.)

Other than a few tuneful melodies, and a saleable title, this musical has little else to offer; it may, however, satisfy in the secondary houses as the lower half of a double bill. Produced on a very modest budget, the story is extremely thin, and little imagination has been put into the direction. The players are not popular enough to attract picture-goers; nor do they enact their roles with any particular skill. Maxie Rosenbloom and Parkyakarkus handle the comedy, but their antics do not provoke much more than a grin. Unlike the title suggests, the picture is void of melodramatic war action. Considerable footage has been given over to stock shots of the armed services:—

When William Roberts, crooner with Henry King's orchestra, enlists in the army, the members of the band, including Mary Healy, vocalist, and Jackie Heller, the music arranger, wish Roberts luck. But King, a conceited individual, sneers at his patriotism. At camp, Roberts becomes buddies with Maxie Rosenbloom, a former prizefighter. Roberts is induced by Capt. Forrest Taylor to take charge of a canteen show sponsored by socialite Lynn Starr and her mother. One day Mary visits the camp while Roberts rehearses a song with Lynn. Mary resents Lynn's loving attitude toward Roberts, and leaves in a huff. Roberts tries to square himself with Mary, but to no avail. Meanwhile King finds himself without an orchestra when Heller and the band members quit because of his unpatriotic attitude. Through Roberts' influence with the Captain, the band is permitted to enlist as a group and join in the canteen show. Parkyakarkus, Roberts' agent, persuades Mary to join the USO. Thus the organization is reunited, except for King. To the surprise of every one, King enters the rehearsal hall in uniform; the death of his soldier brother had changed his attitude. When word comes that they must depart for active service, the show is dropped and the band leads the way to the barracks.

Arthur St. Claire and Sherman Lowe wrote the screen play, Lester Cutler produced it, and Alexis Thurn-Taxis directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Henry Aldrich Gets Glamour" with Jimmy Lydon and John Litel

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 72 min.)

Fairly good program entertainment. The fans who follow the adventures of "Henry Aldrich" will find this comedy by far the best in the series, for the story is superior to that of the other pictures. This time "Henry's" troubles spring from

his winning a movie magazine contest, and becoming innocently involved with a glamorous Hollywood actress. There are the usual escapades in which he shocks the townspeople, causing his family no end of grief, but it all turns out well in the last reel. As in the other pictures, most of the action revolves around teen-age youngsters:—

Winner of a movie magazine contest, Jimmy Lydon goes to Hollywood where he meets and has lunch with Francis Gifford, a glamour star. Upset because the studio felt that she was too old to play Juliet, Francis pays little attention to Jimmy. After luncheon she poses with him for a photograph, but Jimmy stumbles and the picture is snapped showing them embracing. Jimmy returns to his home town where he finds that he had acquired a reputation as a "glamour" boy. Despite his protests, nobody believes that his embracing of Francis had been accidental. Jimmy's romantic escapades shock the townspeople and, as a result, the Voters League withdraws its support from John Litel, Jimmy's father, who was a candidate for a public office. Determined to lose his glamour reputation, and restore his father's name for the election, Jimmy, in the presence of his friends, telephones Francis and invites her to attend a school dance. Although Francis does not remember him, Jimmy pretends that she had accepted his invitation, hoping that his reputation as a "glamour" boy would be shattered when she did not show up. Francis, however, seizes this opportunity for a boy-girl romance to prove to the studio that she was young enough to play Juliet. Jimmy is astounded when she arrives in town and embraces him. Francis pretends to be madly in love with him, and Jimmy's reputation reaches new heights, while his father's chances for election decline. Conscience-stricken because of her deceit, Francis publicly confesses that she had taken advantage of Jimmy, and informs the voters that Jimmy had been trying to help his father. Jimmy becomes a hero.

Edwin Blum and Aileen Leslie wrote the screen play, Walter MacEwen produced it, and Hugh Bennett directed it. The cast includes Charlie Smith, Gail Russell, Diana Lynn and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"They Got Me Covered" with Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour

(RKO, no release date set; time, 95 min.)

Despite a good production, and hard work by the members of the cast, "They Got Me Covered" never rises much above the level of fair entertainment. It may, however, do well at the box office, because of the popularity of Bob Hope and Dorothy Lamour as a team. The story is a hodgepodge of espionage nonsense, tailored to suit Hope's particular brand of humor, but its comedy never reaches hilarious proportions, and somehow it fails to measure up to the standard of previous Bob Hope pictures. In its favor is the fast action:

Because of his failure to cover important news events, Bob Hope, foreign correspondent, is recalled from Russia and fired by Donald MacBride, Amalgamated News head. Hope goes to Washington to visit Dorothy Lamour, his fiancée and manager of Amalgamated's news bureau there. He is visited by John Abbott, a Roumanian agent, who offers to sell him valuable information. Realizing this story will put him back in MacBride's good graces, Hope persuades Dorothy to pay Abbott. But before he can tell his tale, Abbott is scared off by Axis gunmen. Abbott sends Hope a message, directing him to send a stenographer to a secret hideout. Dorothy gives the assignment to Phyllis Ruth, who, after getting the story, is kidnapped by Axis agents. Learning that Hope was on their trail, Otto Preminger, Axis leader, and Edward Ciannelli and Philip Ahn, his aides, scheme to discredit the reporter and to make him a national laughing-stock so that nobody would believe his story of espionage. Through Lenore Aubert, the Nazis succeed in drugging Hope, and he wakes up in Niagara Falls to find himself married to Marion Martin a buxom blonde burlesque queen. Panicky, Hope rushes back to Washington, but no one believes his explanation, except Dorothy, who knew he detested blondes. Marion learns the true reasons for her marriage to Hope, but before she can clear his name she is killed. Hope and Dorothy trace the spies to their beauty salon headquarters, and a riotous struggle follows as they seek to free the imprisoned Phyllis. The FBI arrives in time to rescue them both and round up the Axis gang.

Harry Kurnitz wrote the screen play, Samuel Goldwyn produced it, and David Butler directed it. The cast includes Donald Meek, Florence Bates, Walter Catlett and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Hitler's Children" with Tim Holt, Bonita Granville and Otto Kruger

(RKO, February 26; time, 83 min.)

A powerful drama, one that should be seen by every American, for it brings to light, in all its ruthlessness, the Nazi ideology against which we fight. Based on Gregor Zeimer's non-fiction best seller, "Education for Death," this film is unrelenting in its merciless exposure of the barbaric system with which the Nazis are moulding the youth of Germany into a force of regimented brutality. In its depiction of the systematic degradation of Germany's youth, "Hitler's Children" does not emerge as a pretty picture, but it is the sort that will grip the spectator. Among the Nazi fanaticisms shown is the sterilization of women for various reasons—physical weakness, mental weakness, non-Aryan ancestry, and even for refusal to subordinate themselves to the State; the teachings to teen-age girls of the glories of bringing illegitimate children into the world as their contribution to the creation of a super-race; the teachings which impregnate boys from the ages of six to eighteen with the philosophy of National Socialism—all these, and more, are brought out in the tragic romance between a girl and boy whose conflicting ideals carry them over separate roads. Although the film treats of delicate subjects, it has been handled in good taste, and at no time is it offensive. The acting and direction is first rate:—

Among the pupils of Professor Kent Smith, head of the American Colony School in Berlin, is Bonita Granville, daughter of German-American parents, who attracts the interest of Tim Holt, a student at a Nazi school nearby. A brief romance develops between the two before Holt is swept into the gathering Nazi storm, and Bonita becomes Smith's assistant. They meet again when the Gestapo orders Bonita to leave the school because of her German blood, despite Smith's protests to Holt, now a Gestapo lieutenant. Through Lloyd Corrigan, a journalist friend, Smith learns that Bonita was held in a labor camp. Colonel Otto Kruger approves Smith's request to inspect the camp, but Holt, his aide, suspects that Smith hoped to rescue Bonita. He warns Smith against this, then takes him to the camp to prove to him how happy Bonita was there. Smith notices Bonita's feigned enthusiasm for the New Order, but realizes that there was nothing he can do to free her. Bonita finally denounces the Nazi beliefs, and is sent to a concentration camp. Learning that she is to be sterilized, Holt visits Bonita and begs her to recant and save herself. When she refuses he pleads that she have a child by him—an act that would satisfy the State. Broken-hearted, Bonita runs away. She is traced to a church, and surrenders to keep Bishop H. B. Warner from being slain. Bonita is sentenced to ten lashes and, Kruger, to test Holt's loyalty, orders him to supervise the punishment. Holt stops the lashing, fully realizing that he would be punished. Offered a hero's death, and military honors, if he will confess his crime to Germany's youth in a nationwide broadcast, Holt accepts. But instead of recanting, Holt appeals to his listeners to free themselves from the barbaric Nazis. As Bonita rushes to his side, Nazi bullets slay them both.

Emmet Lavery wrote the screen play, Edward A. Golden and Robert S. Golden produced it, and Edward Dmytryk directed it. The cast includes Erford Gage, Hans Conried, Gavin Muir, Nancy Gates and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Silent Witness" with Frank Albertson and Maris Wrixon

(Monogram, January 15; time, 62 min.)

Ordinary program fare. It is a racketeer melodrama fashioned along familiar lines, lacking freshness in dialogue, as well as in action; it should, however, serve its purpose as a secondary feature in small-town and neighborhood houses, where patrons are not too concerned about story details. The plot is one of murderous gangland activities, which serve as a background for the romance between a female assistant district attorney and the gangsters' lawyer, who finds the district attorney a rival for her love. Although the action is not brisk, it does move along at a steady pace, but it is only mildly exciting. No fault can be found with the individual performances:—

District Attorney Bradley Page and Maris Wrixon, his assistant, seek to convict Milburn Stone and Anthony Ward, brothers and headmen of a silk racket; both had been indicted for murder. Frank Albertson, their attorney, who is in love with Maris, gets them an acquittal on a legal technicality. Maris disapproves of Albertson's methods, and breaks her engagement to him. When Jimmy Eagles, a gang member, becomes troublesome, the brothers decide to kill him. But before he dies, Eagles is found wounded, and lives long enough to confess to Page. The gangsters decide to

murder Page. Albertson learns of their plan, but he is unable to locate Page to warn him. Meanwhile the gangsters corner Page and kill him. Ace, Page's police dog, is shot when he bites one of the gangsters during the melee. Two children find the dog, and take him to their father, a farmer. Angry with Albertson, because he had tried to interfere with their plan, the brothers deliberately place the murder gun in his car to make it appear as if Albertson had murdered Page out of jealousy; Page, too, had loved Maris. Albertson is convicted of the crime. Maris, however, believes him innocent, and does her best to track down the real killers. One day the farmer returns the dog to Maris, just as the gangsters leave headquarters after being questioned. Recognizing the man he bit, Ace attacks him. The dog is pulled off the gangster only after he promises to confess everything. His testimony brings about the gangsters' conviction. Maris and Albertson are reunited.

John O'Donnell wrote the screen play, Martin Mooney and Max King produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it. Adult entertainment.

"Star Spangled Rhythm" with an all star cast

(Paramount, Feb. 12; time, 99 min.)

Excellent mass entertainment. Assuredly a box-office success because of its marquee strength, this comedy with music includes practically every star on the Paramount lot, as well as a number of its production executives. The result is most gratifying. The picture contains the sort of humor the masses will enjoy, for the stars constantly poke fun at the studio, the motion picture industry, and themselves. The story deals with a studio gateman who causes the studio and himself no end of trouble when, for the sake of impressing his sailor son, he pretends to be the head of the studio. Throughout the action the stars and executives appear in small bits, until toward the finish where they put on a huge show in a Naval auditorium, with Bob Hope as master of ceremonies. There they appear in numerous hilarious skits, the sort that will delight your patrons. Highlights of the show are: The song, "A Sweater, A Sarong, and a Peek-a-Boo Bang" as sung by Paulette Goddard, Dorothy Lamour, and Veronica Lake, who are in turn burlesqued by Arthur Treacher, Walter Catlett, and Sterling Holloway singing the same song; a laugh-provoking "Parlor, Bedroom, and Bath" skit with Bob Hope, William Bendix, and Jerry Colonna; Rochester in a "Harlem" musical number; Franchot Tone, Ray Milland, Lynne Overman, and Fred McMurray as husbands at home for an afternoon bridge party, while their wives work at defense jobs; Vera Zorina in a beautiful dance number; Alan Ladd in a skit burlesquing his "tough guy" reputation; and Bing Crosby singing "Old Glory" in a rousing patriotic finale. One sequence that will provoke hearty laughter is where Betty Hutton becomes involved with two acrobats who help her to scale a wall. It is a fast-moving production from beginning to end, and it is just the right kind of medicine for those who seek to forget the cares of the day:—

Victor Moore, a studio gateman, is troubled when Eddie Bracken, his sailor son, telephones and informs him that he was coming to the studio with some of his buddies; Moore had led Eddie to believe that he was head of the studio. Betty Hutton, a switchboard operator, decides to help Moore out of his troubles. When Walter Abel, studio chief, leaves the lot, Betty rushes Moore into Abel's swanky office in time for him to greet Eddie and his friends. While speaking with Eddie, Moore answers telephone calls from various production heads and, posing as Abel, insults them. As a result the entire studio ostracizes Abel, who is at a loss to understand why. After a tour of the lot, Betty accompanies Eddie back to his ship, and promises to marry him on the following day provided he is given leave. Eddie manages to arrange for shore leave by promising the Captain that his father would put on a huge show for the fleet on the following day. Once again Moore uses Abel's office, this time to order the stars to appear at the show. But Abel catches him, and throws him off the lot. Determined to keep the truth from Eddie, Betty speaks to the stars and persuades them to appear at the show. Despite Abel's attempt to stop it, the show goes on. It is a huge success. Edward Fielding, Chairman of the company, who had witnessed the show, forgives the stars and promises Moore a better job.

Harry Tugend wrote the screen play, Joseph Sistrom produced it, and George Marshall directed it. Others in the cast are Dick Powell, Mary Martin, Susan Hayward, Cass Daley, Walter Dare Wahl & Co., Marjorie Reynolds, Gary Crosby (Bing Crosby's son), Ernest Truex, Macdonald Carey, Betty Rhodes, Golden Gate Quartette, Donna Drake, Cecil B. DeMille, Preston Sturges, Eddie Johnson, and Slim and Sam.

Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXV

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, JANUARY 2, 1943

No. 1

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Boss of Hangtown Mesa—Universal (58 m.).....	not reviewed
Boss Said "No", The—Columbia (See "Blondie Goes to College").....	23
Boston Blackie Goes Hollywood—Columbia (68 m.).....	186
Bowery at Midnight—Monogram (62 min.).....	166
Bundle of Trouble, A—Columbia (See "Blondie's Blessed Event").....	63
Busses Roar—Warner Bros. (59 m.).....	134
Cairo—MGM (99 m.).....	130
Call of the Canyon—Republic (61 m.).....	not reviewed
Careful, Soft Shoulders—20th Century-Fox (69 m.).....	132
Casablanca—Warner Bros. (99 min.).....	190
Cat People—RKO (73 min.).....	182
China Girl—20th Century-Fox (95 min.).....	196
City of Silent Men—PRC (64 min.).....	203
Commandos Strike at Dawn—Columbia (98 min.).....	208
Confessions—Columbia (See "Confessions of Boston Blackie") 1941.....	200
Counter Espionage—Columbia (71 m.).....	150
Criminal Investigator—Monogram (61 min.).....	174
Danger in the Pacific—Universal (59 min.).....	123
Daring Young Man, The—Columbia (72 min.).....	195
Dawn on the Great Divide—Monogram (70m.).....	not reviewed
Deep In the Heart of Texas—Universal (61 min.).....	not reviewed
Desperate Journey—Warner Bros. (106 m.).....	135
Destination Unknown—Universal (60 m.).....	155
Devil With Hitler, The—United Artists (44 min.).....	170
Dr. Gillespie's New Assistant—MGM (87 min.).....	184
Dr. Renault's Secret—20th Century-Fox (58 min.).....	170
Drums of the Congo—Universal (59 min.).....	123
Enemy Agents Meet Ellery Queen—Columbia (64 m.).....	135
Enemy Roundup—Monogram (See "Hillbilly Blitzkrieg").....	150
Eyes in the Night—MGM (79 m.).....	146
Eyes of the Underworld—Universal (60 min.).....	162
Falcon's Brother, The—RKO (63 min.).....	158
Flight Lieutenant—Columbia (80 min.).....	111
Flying Fortress—Warner Bros. (68 m.).....	156
Flying Tigers—Republic (100 m.).....	155
Flying with Music—United Artists (46 min.).....	118
Foreign Agent—Monogram (64 min.).....	158
Forest Rangers, The—Paramount (87 min.).....	160
For Me and My Gal—MGM (102 m.).....	146
Footlight Serenade—20th Century-Fox (80 min.).....	110
Frontier Marshal Along the Sundown Trails—PRC (59 min.).....	not reviewed
Frontier Marshal in Prairie Pals—PRC (60 m.).....	not reviewed
Gallant Lady—Producers Releasing Corp. (67 m.).....	143
Gentleman Jim—Warner Bros. (104 min.).....	176
George Washington Slept Here—Warner Bros. (92 min.).....	152
Get Hep to Love—Universal (78 min.).....	158
Girl Trouble—20th Century-Fox (82 m.).....	156
Give Out, Sisters—Universal (63 m.).....	143
Glass Key, The—Paramount (83 m.).....	139
Gorilla Man, The—Warner Bros. (64 min.).....	198
Great Gildersleeve, The—RKO (62 min.).....	184
Great Impersonation, The—Universal (79 min.).....	202
Halfway to Shanghai—Universal (60 m.).....	156
Hard Way, The—Warner Bros. (108 m.).....	152
Heart of the Golden West—Republic (65m.).....	not reviewed
Henry Aldrich, Editor—Paramount (72 min.).....	159
Here I Come—Columbia (See "Harvard Here I Come").....	16
Here We Go Again—RKO (76 m.).....	139
Hidden Hand, The—Warner Bros. (67 m.).....	154
Highways by Night—RKO (63 m.).....	131
Hillbilly Blitzkrieg—Monogram (62 m.).....	150
Hi, Neighbor—Republic (71 min.).....	122
Human Sabotage—Warners (See "Murder in the Big House").....	59
Ice Capades Revue—Republic (79 min.).....	202
Iceland—20th Century-Fox (78 m.).....	132
I Married A Witch—United Artists (75 min.).....	171
Invisible Agent—Universal (80 m.).....	131
In Which We Serve—United Artists (112 min.).....	171
Isle of Missing Men—Monogram (64 m.).....	142
Jacaré—United Artists (65 min.).....	207
Joan of Ozark—Republic (80 min.).....	119
Johnny Doughboy—Republic (63 min.).....	206
Journey for Margaret—MGM (81 min.).....	176
Journey Into Fear—RKO (70 min.).....	126
Jungle Siren—PRC (68 min.).....	166
Just Off Broadway—20th Century-Fox (65 m.).....	132
Keeper of the Flame—MGM (99 min.).....	204
King of the Stallions—Monogram (63 m.).....	not reviewed
Kukan, The Battle Cry of China—United Artists (61 min.).....	119

Lady from Chungking—PRC (69 min.).....	195	Ridin' Down the Canyon—Republic (55m.)..	not reviewed
Lady In a Jam—Universal (81 min.).....	106	Riding Through Nevada—Columbia (61 m.)..	not reviewed
Life Begins at Eight-Thirty—20th Century-Fox (84m.)..	196	Road To Morocco—Paramount (83 min.).....	160
Little Joe, The Wrangler—Universal (61 min.)	not reviewed	Rubber Racketeers—Monogram (61 min.).....	107
Little Tokyo, U. S. A.—20th Century-Fox (63 min.)..	111	Sabotage Squad—Columbia (64 min.).....	126
Living Ghost, The—Monogram (61 min.).....	183	Saludos Amigos—RKO (41 min.).....	203
London Blackout Murders—Republic (58 min.).....	206	Scattergood Survives a Murder—RKO (66 min.)....	167
Lone Prairie, The—Columbia (55 m.).....	not reviewed	Secret Enemies—Warner Bros. (57 m.).....	134
Lone Rider in Border Round-Up—PRC (59 m.)	not reviewed	Secrets of a Co-Ed—PRC (67 min.).....	162
Lone Rider in Outlaw of Boulder Pass—PRC (61 min.)	not reviewed	Seven Days Leave—RKO (87 min.).....	168
Loves of Edgar Allan Poe, The—20th Century-Fox (66 min.)	110	Seven Miles from Alcatraz—RKO (62 min.).....	182
Lucky Jordan—Paramount (83 min.).....	186	Seven Sweethearts—MGM (98 m.).....	130
Lucky Legs—Columbia (64 m.).....	155	Shadows on the Sage—Republic (55 m.).....	not reviewed
Lure of the Islands—Monogram (61 min.).....	128	Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror—Universal (64 m.)	147
Madame Spy—Universal (62 min.).....	194	Silver Queen—United Artists (80 min.).....	183
Magnificent Ambersons, The—RKO (87 min.).....	107	Sin Town—Universal (74 min.).....	159
Major and the Minor, The—Paramount (98 m.).....	138	Smart Alecks—Monogram (66 min.).....	114
Manila Calling—20th Century-Fox (79 m.).....	156	Smith of Minnesota—Columbia (66 min.).....	166
Man in the Trunk, The—20th Century-Fox (70 m.)....	154	Sombrero Kid, The—Republic (56 m.).....	not reviewed
Man of Courage—PRC (66 min.).....	202	Somewhere I'll Find You—MGM (107 min.).....	126
Man's World, A—Columbia (62 min.).....	198	Spirit of Stanford, The—Columbia (74 min.).....	163
Men of Destiny—Universal ("See Men of Texas").....	115	Springtime in the Rockies—20th Century-Fox (91m.)..	154
Men of Texas—Universal (81 min.).....	115	Stand By All Networks—Columbia (63 min.).....	176
Mexican Spitfire's Elephant—RKO (64 min.).....	127	Stand By For Action—MGM (108 min.).....	200
Miss V From Moscow—PRC (66 min.).....	175	Street of Chance—Paramount (74 min.).....	160
Moon and Sixpence, The—United Artists (87 m.)....	151	Strictly in the Groove—Universal (63 m.).....	143
Moonlight in Havana—Universal (63 min.).....	167	Sundown Kid—Republic (56 min.).....	not reviewed
Mountain Rhythm—Republic (70 min.).....	199	Sunset Serenade—Republic (58 m.).....	not reviewed
Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch—Paramount (80 min.)	158	Tales of Manhattan—20th Century-Fox (117 min.)..	127
Mummy's Tomb, The—Universal (61 min.).....	167	Talk of the Town, The—Columbia (117 min.).....	122
My Heart Belongs to Daddy—Paramount (75 min.)....	178	Tennessee Johnson—MGM (103 min.).....	204
My Sister Eileen—Columbia (97 m.)	150	Texas to Bataan—Monogram (56 min.).....	not reviewed
Navy Comes Through, The—RKO (81 min.).....	167	That Other Woman—20th Century-Fox (75 min.)..	168
Neath Brooklyn Bridge—Monogram (60 min.).....	179	There's One Born Every Minute—Universal (58 m.)..	138
Night for Crime, A—Producers Releasing Corp.(73m.)..	142	They Raid by Night—Producers Releasing Corp. (70 min.)	115
Nightmare—Universal (80 min.).....	183	Thunder Birds—20th Century-Fox (78 min.).....	170
Night Monster—Universal (72 min.).....	166	Thundering Hoofs—RKO (61 m.).....	not reviewed
Northwest Rangers—MGM (64 min.).....	175	Timber—Universal (60 m.).....	139
Now, Voyager—Warner Bros. (116 m.).....	134	Time to Kill—20th Century-Fox (61 min.).....	196
Old Homestead, The—Republic (68 m.).....	138	Tish—MGM (83 min.).....	118
Omaha Trail, The—MGM (61 m.)	151	Tomorrow We Live—PRC (67 min.).....	159
Once Upon a Honeymoon—RKO (117 min.).....	178	Top Sergeant—Universal (64 m.).....	139
One of Our Aircraft is Missing—United Artists(90m.)..	147	Tornado In the Saddle—Columbia (59 min.)..	not reviewed
One Thrilling Night—Monogram (67 min.).....	119	Tower of Terror—Monogram (62 min.).....	114
Orchestra Wives—20th Century-Fox (97 m.).....	131	Train Riders—Monogram (55 min.).....	not reviewed
Outlaws of Pine Ridge—Republic (56 min.)..	not reviewed	Traitor Within, The—Republic (61 min.).....	194
Overland to Deadwood—Columbia (58 m.)..	not reviewed	Two Fisted Justice—Monogram (55m.).....	not reviewed
Over My Dead Body—20th Century-Fox (68 min.)....	198	Underground Agent—Columbia (68 min.).....	204
Palm Beach Story, The—Paramount (87 min.).....	178	Undying Monster, The—20th Century-Fox (63 min.)..	170
Panama Hattie—MGM (79 min.).....	118	United We Stand—20th Century-Fox (69 min.).....	107
Pardon My Gun—Columbia (57 min.).....	not reviewed	Valley of Haunted Men—Republic (56 min.)..	not reviewed
Pardon My Sarong—Universal (83 min.).....	126	Vengeance of the West—Columbia (61 m.)..	not reviewed
Payoff, The—PRC (72 min.).....	203	Wake Island—Paramount (86 m.).....	130
Personal Honour—Columbia (See "Hello Annapolis")..	71	War Against Mrs. Hadley, The—MGM (84 min.)....	128
Phantom Killer—Monogram (60 m.)	151	War Dogs—Monogram (63 min.).....	179
Pied Piper, The—20th Century-Fox (86 min.).....	110	We Are the Marines—20th Century-Fox (65 min.)....	200
Pirates of the Prairie—RKO (57 min.).....	not reviewed	West of the Law—Monogram (57 min.).....	not reviewed
Pittsburgh—Universal (91 min.).....	200	When Johnny Comes Marching Home—Universal (73 min.)	208
Police Bullets—Monogram (61 m.).....	146	Whistling in Dixie—MGM (73 min.).....	175
Powers Girl, The—United Artists (93 min.).....	207	White Cargo—MGM (90 m.)	150
Pride of the Army (See "War Dogs").....	179	Who Done It?—Universal (77 min.).....	184
Pride of the Yankees, The—RKO (127 min.).....	114	Wildcat—Paramount (72 m.).....	138
Priorities on Parade—Paramount (79 min.).....	122	Wings and the Woman—RKO (90 min.).....	127
Prisoner of Japan—Producers Releasing Corp. (64 m.)..	106	World at War, The—U. S. Govt. (66 m.).....	142
Prison Girls—PRC (See "Gallant Lady").....	143	Wrecking Crew—Paramount (72 min.).....	179
Queen of Broadway—PRC (64 min.)	208	X Marks the Spot—Republic (55 min.).....	182
Quiet, Please—Murder—20th Century-Fox (70 m.)....	202	Yank at Eton, A—MGM (87 m.).....	132
Random Harvest—MGM (126 min.).....	190	Yank in Libya, A—PRC (67 min.).....	163
Reunion—MGM (103 min.).....	194	You Can't Escape Forever—Warner Bros. (77 m.)....	154
Reunion in France—MGM (see "Reunion").....	194	Young Mr. Pitt, The—20th Century-Fox (103 m.)....	152
Rhythm Parade—Monogram (68 min.)	206	Youth On Parade—Republic (72 min.).....	162
Riders of the West—Monogram (60 m.).....	not reviewed	You Were Never Lovelier—Columbia (97 min.).....	162

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES**Columbia Features**

- (729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)
- 4022 You Were Never Lovelier—Hayworth-Astaire Nov. 19
- 4038 Junior Army—Bartholomew-Halop Nov. 26
- 4202 Pardon My Gun—Starrett (57 min.) Dec. 1
- 4839 Underground Agent—Bennett-Brooks Dec. 3
- A Night To Remember—Young-Aherne Dec. 10
- 4210 A Tornado In the Saddle—Hayden (59 m.) Dec. 15
- Commandos Strike At Dawn—Muni-Gish Jan. 7
- City Without Men—Darnell-Duane Jan. 14
- One Dangerous Night—William-Chapman Jan. 21
- Power of the Press—Tracy-Dickson Jan. 28

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

- (1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)
- 312 For Me and My Gal—Garland-Murphy Nov.
- 313 Whistling In Dixie—Skelton-Rutherford Dec.
- 314 Journey For Margaret—Young-Day Dec.
- 315 Reunion in France—Crawford-Wayne (See "Reunion") Dec.
- 316 Stand By For Action—Taylor-Laughton Dec.
- 317 Dr. Gillespie's New Assistant—Barrymore Jan.
- 318 Andy Hardy's Double Life—Stone-Rooney Jan.
- 319 Northwest Rangers—Craig-Lundigan Jan.
- 320 Keeper of the Flame—Tracy-Hepburn Feb.
- 321 Three Hearts For Julia—Sothorn-Douglas Feb.
- 322 Tennessee Johnson—Van Heflin-Barrymore Feb.

Monogram Features

- (630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)
- The Living Ghost—Dunn-Woodbury Nov. 27
- Trail Riders—King (55 m.) Dec. 4
- Rhythm Parade—Storm-Lowery Dec. 11
- Dawn on the Great Divide—Buck Jones (70 m.) Dec. 18
- Two Fisted Justice—King (55 min.) Jan. 8
- The Silent Witness—Albertson-Wrixon Jan. 15

Paramount Features

- (1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)
- 4210 Street of Chance—Meredith-Trevor Dec. 18
- 4211 The Palm Beach Story—Colbert-McCrea Jan. 1
- 4212 Wrecking Crew—Arlen-Parker no rel. date set
- 4213 The Avengers—All English Cast no rel. date set
- 4214 My Heart Belongs to Daddy—Carlson-O'Driscoll Feb. 12
- 4231 Star Spangled Rhythm—All Star Cast Feb. 12
- 4215 Lucky Jordan—Ladd-Walker Feb. 26

Producers Releasing Corporation

- (1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)
- 358 Billy the Kid Rides Again—Crabbe Jan. 22
- 311 Dead Men Walk—Zucco-Carlisle Feb. 10
- 30 Follies Girl—Barrie-Nolan-Oliver Feb. 12
- 364 Lone Rider No. 2—Livingston Feb. 12
- 304 A Night For Crime—Farrell-Talbot Feb. 18
- 31 Corregidor—Landi-Kruger Feb. 26
- 352 Texas Rangers No. 2—Newill-O'Brien Mar. 5

Republi- Features

- (1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)
- 262 Valley of Haunted Men—Three Mesq. (56m.) Nov. 13
- 251 Heart of the Golden West—Rogers (65m.) Dec. 11
- 207 The Traitor Within—Barry-Parker Dec. 16
- 208 Secrets of the Underground—Hubbard-Grey (re.) Dec. 18
- 206 Ice Capades Revue—Drew-Denning (re.) Dec. 24
- 273 Sundown Kid—Don Barry (re.) (56m.) Dec. 28
- 253 Ridin' Down the Canyon—Roy Rogers (55m.) Dec. 30
- 205 Johnny Doughboy—Withers-Wilcoxon Dec. 31
- 209 Mountain Rhythm—Weaver Bros. Jan. 8
- 210 London Blackout Murders—Abbott-McLeod Jan. 15
- Thundering Trails—Three Mesq. Jan. 25
- 211 Fighting Devil Dogs—Powell-Brix (Adapted from serial of same title) Jan. 29
- 274 Dead Man's Gulch—Red Barry Feb. 5

RKO Features

- (1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)
- 382 Pirates of the Prairie—Holt-Edwards (57m.) Nov. 20
- 311 Once Upon A Honeymoon—Rogers-Grant Nov. 27
- 312 Army Surgeon—Ellison-Wyatt Dec. 4
- 313 Cat People—Simon-Holt Jan. 1
- Saludos Amigos—Walt Disney Jan. 8
- 314 The Great Gildersleeve—Harold Peary Jan. 15
- 315 Seven Miles From Alcatraz—Craig-Granville Jan. 22

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

- (444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)
- 321 Dr. Renault's Secret—Naish-Sheppard Dec. 11
- 322 Life Begins at 8:30—Woolley-Lupino Dec. 25
- 323 China Girl—Tierney-Montgomery Jan. 1
- 324 We Are the Marines—March of Time Feature Jan. 8
- 325 Over My Dead Body—Berle-Hughes Jan. 15
- 326 Time To Kill—Nolan-Angel Jan. 22

United Artists Features

- (729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)
- Silver Queen—Brent-Lane Nov. 13
- Jacaré—Frank Buck Nov. 27
- American Empire—Foster-Gifford-Dix Dec. 11
- Lost Canyon—William Boyd Dec. 18
- Crystal Ball—Goddard-Milland (re.) Dec. 22
- In Which We Serve—British (re.) Dec. 24
- McGuerrins From Brooklyn—Bradley-Bendix Dec. 31
- The Powers Girl—Shirley-Landis Jan. 15
- Fall In—Hal Roach (re.) Jan. 29
- Young and Willing—Holden-Hayward Feb. 5
- Calaboose—Rogers-Beery, Jr. Mar. 5

Universal Features

- (1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)
- 7038 Night Monster—Porter-Lugosi Oct. 23
- 7002 Who Done It?—Abbott & Costello Nov. 6
- 7072 Little Joe, The Wrangler—J. M. Brown (61 m.) Nov. 13
- Nightmare—Barrymore-Donlevy Nov. 13
- 7028 Strictly In the Groove—MacDonald-Errol Nov. 20
- 7029 Behind the Eight Ball—Ritz Bros.-Bruce Dec. 4
- 7034 Madame Spy—Bennett-Porter Dec. 11
- Pittsburgh—Dietrich-Wayne (re.) Dec. 11
- 7032 The Great Impersonation—Bellamy-Ankers Dec. 18
- 7063 Arabian Nights—Sabu-Montez-Hall (re.) Dec. 25
- When Johnny Comes Marching Home—Jones-Frazee (re.) Jan. 1
- Eyes of the Underworld—Dix-Barrie Jan. 8
- Shadow of a Doubt—Wright-Cotten Jan. 15
- 7027 Mug Town—Dead End Kids (re.) Jan. 22

Warner-First National Features

- (321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)
- 210 George Washington Slept Here—Benny Nov. 28
- 211 Flying Fortress—Greene-Lehmann Dec. 5
- 215 Varsity Show—Powell-Lane (re.) Dec. 19
- 201 Yankee Doodle Dandy—Cagney-Leslie Jan. 2
- 216 Gorilla Man—Loder-Ford Jan. 16
- 214 Casablanca—Bogart-Bergman-Henried Jan. 23

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**Columbia—One Reel**

- 4853 Screen Snapshots No. 3 (9 m.) Oct. 23
- 4502 Tito's Guitar—Col. Rhap. (7 m.) Oct. 30
- 4802 The Wizard of the Fairway—Sport (10½m.) Nov. 6
- 4654 Community Sings No. 4 (8 m.) Nov. 12
- 4703 Malice In Slumberland—Cartoon (6½ m.) Nov. 20
- 4854 Screen Snapshots No. 4 (10 m.) Nov. 26
- 4503 Toll Bridge Troubles—Col. Rhap. (7 m.) Nov. 27
- 4803 Winter Paradise—Sport (10 m.) Dec. 8
- 4903 Our Second Front—Panaramics (10 m.) Dec. 11
- 4655 Com. Sings No. 6 (9½ m.) Dec. 11
- 4704 Cholly Polly—Cartoon (6½ m.) Dec. 18
- 4504 King Midas, Jr.—Col. Rhap. (7 m.) Dec. 18
- 4953 Shep Fields—Famous Bands (10 m.) Dec. 23
- 4855 Screen Snapshots No. 5 (10 m.) Dec. 25
- 4961 Wings For the Fledgling—Amer. Speaks (10 m.) Dec. 31

Columbia—Two Reels

- 4424 Sappy Pappy—All Star (16 m.).....Oct. 30
 4129 The Radio Bomb—Secret Code No. 9
 (16½ m.).....Oct. 30
 4130 Line Bombardment—Secret Code No. 10
 (17 m.).....Nov. 6
 4131 Ears of the Enemy—Secret Code No. 11
 (16 m.).....Nov. 13
 4402 Sock-A Bye Baby—Stooges (16½ m.).....Nov. 13
 4132 Scourge of the Orient—Secret Code No. 12
 (19 m.).....Nov. 20
 4133 Pawn of the Spy Ring—Secret Code No. 13
 (19 m.).....Nov. 27
 4425 Ham & Yeggs—All Star (16 m.).....Nov. 27
 4134 Dead Men of the Deep—Secret Code No. 14
 (17 m.).....Dec. 4
 4135 The Secret Code Smashed—Secret Code No. 15
 (16 m.).....Dec. 11
 4426 Piano Mooner—All Star (17 m.).....Dec. 11
 1885 Trouble in Canyon City—Valley of Vanishing
 Men No. 1 (20 m.).....Dec. 17

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- W-356 Wild Honey—Cartoon (8 m.).....Nov. 7
 T-412 Modern Mexico City—Traveltalks (9 m.).....Nov. 7
 K-481 Madero of Mexico—Passing Par. (11 m.).....Nov. 28
 C-491 Unexpected Riches—Our Gang (11 m.).....Nov. 28
 T-413 Glimpes of Ontario—Traveltalks (9 m.).....Dec. 5
 S-461 First Aid—Pete Smith (10 m.).....Dec. 17
 M-431 The Last Lesson—Min. (11 min.).....Dec. 19
 S-462 Marines in the Making—Pas. Par. (9 m.).....Dec. 26

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-305 Mr. Blabbermouth—Special (19 m.).....Aug. 8
 A-401 Keep 'Em Sailing—Special (20 m.).....Nov. 28

Paramount—One Reel

- R2-2 The Fighting Spirit—Spotlight (9 m.).....Nov. 13
 E2-2 Scrap the Japs—Popeye (6 m.).....Nov. 20
 J2-2 Popular Science No. 2 (10 m.).....Nov. 27
 L2-2 Unusual Occupations No. 2 (10 m.).....Dec. 4
 A2-3 Hands of Women—Headliner (11 m.).....Dec. 11
 Y2-1 Speaking of Animals and Their Families
 (8 m.).....Dec. 18
 T2-3 The Price of Victory—Victory Short (13m.).....Dec. 22
 W2-1 Superman in Destruction, Inc.—Superman
 (8 m.).....Dec. 25
 E2-3 Me Musical Nephews—Popeye (6 m.).....Dec. 25
 R2-3 Modern Biking—Spotlight (9 m.).....Jan. 8
 T2-4 The Aldrich Family Gets Into Scrap—
 Victory Short (10 m.) (re.).....Jan. 15
 A2-4 Mitchel Ayers & Orch.—Headliner (9 m.).....Jan. 15
 E2-4 Spinach Fer Britain—Popeye (6 m.).....Jan. 22

RKO—One Reel

- 24112 How To Swim—Disney (7½ m.).....Oct. 23
 24113 Sky Trooper—Disney (7 m.).....Nov. 6
 24114 Pluto At the Zoo—Disney (8 m.).....Nov. 20
 24115 How to Fish—Disney (7 m.).....Dec. 4

1942-43 Season

- 34302 Touchdown Tars—Sportscope (8 m.).....Oct. 9
 34403 Ray McKinley & Orch.—Jamborees (8 m.).....Oct. 30
 34303 Winter Setting—Sportscope (8 m.).....Nov. 6
 34404 Dick Stabile & Orch.—Jamborees (8 m.).....Nov. 27
 34304 Q-Men—Sportscope (8 m.).....Dec. 4
 34405 Enr. Madriguera & Orch.—Jamborees (8m.).....Dec. 25

RKO—Two Reels

- 33401 Two for the Money—Kennedy (17 m.).....Sept. 11
 33201 The State vs. Glen Willet—Famous Jury Trials
 (18 m.).....Sept. 18
 33702 Deer! Deer!—Leon Errol (17 m.).....Oct. 23
 33101 Private Smith of the U.S.A.—This Is America
 (19 m.).....Oct. 23
 33402 Rough on Rents—Edgar Kennedy (18 m.).....Oct. 30
 33202 The State vs. Thomas Crosby—Famous Jury
 Trials (18 m.).....Nov. 13
 33102 Women At Arms—This Is America (19 m.).....Nov. 20
 33703 Pretty Dolly—Leon Errol (17 m.).....Dec. 11

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 3901 Monkey Doodle Dandies—Lew Lehr (9 m.).....Dec. 4
 3558 Barnyard WAAC—Terry-Toon (7 m.).....Dec. 11
 3302 When Winter Calls—Sports (9 m.).....Dec. 18
 3567 Somewhere In the Pacific—T.T. (9 m.).....Dec. 25
 3156 Strange Empire—Magic Carpet (8 m.).....Jan. 1
 8359 Scrap For Victory—Terry-Toon (7 m.).....Jan. 8
 3303 Steelhead Fighters—Sports (9 m.).....Jan. 15
 3568 He Dood It Again—Terry-Toon.....Jan. 22
 3202 Climbing The Peaks—Hugh James.....Jan. 29

Universal—One Reel

- 7232 Boogie Woogie Sioux—Swing Symphony
 (7 m.).....Nov. 30
 7375 Designed by Fannie Hurst—Per. Odd. (9 m.).....Dec. 14
 7243 Air Raid Warden—Cartoon (7 m.).....Dec. 21
 7355 Western Whoopee—Var. Views (9 m.).....Dec. 28
 7233 Cow Cow Boogie—Swing Symphony (7 m.).....Jan. 4
 7356 Winter Sports Jamboree—Var. Views (9 m.).....Jan. 18

Universal—Two Reels

- 7124 Swing's the Thing—Musical (15 m.).....Dec. 2
 7792 In the Claws of the Cougar—Overland Mail
 No. 12 (18 m.).....Dec. 8
 7793 The Frenzied Mob—Overland Mail
 No. 13 (17 m.).....Dec. 15
 7111 Roar, Navy, Roar—Special (15 m.).....Dec. 16
 7794 The Toll of Treachery—Overland Mail
 No. 14 (17 m.).....Dec. 22
 7795 The Mail Goes Through—Overland Mail
 No. 15 (19 m.).....Dec. 29
 7581 Adventures of Smilin' Jack No. 1—The High
 Road to Doom (26 m.).....Jan. 5
 7582 The Rising Sun Strikes—Smilin' Jack No. 2
 (21 m.).....Jan. 12
 7125 Chasin' The Blues—Musical (15 m.).....Jan. 13
 7583 Attacked by Bombers—Smilin' Jack No. 3
 (20 m.).....Jan. 19

Vitaphone—One Reel

- 8406 Horses! Horses! Horses!—Sports (10 m.).....Dec. 12
 8504 Borah Minnevitich—Mel. Master (10 m.).....Dec. 26
 8304 So You Think You Need Glasses—Novel.
 (10 m.).....Dec. 26
 8707 Coal Black & De Sebben Dwarfs—Mer. Mel.
 (7 m.) (re.).....Jan. 9
 8604 Confusions of a Nutzy Spy—Looney Tune
 (7 m.) (re.).....Jan. 9
 8404 Cuba, Land of Adventure and Sport—Sports
 (10 m.).....Jan. 16
 8708 Pigs In A Polka—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).....Jan. 23
 8605 To Duck Or Not To Duck—Looney Tune
 (7 m.).....Jan. 23
 8709 Tortoise Wins by a Hare—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).....Feb. 6
 8606 Hop And Go—Looney Tune (7 m.).....Feb. 6
 8710 Fifth Column Mouse—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).....Feb. 20
 8407 Sporting Dogs—Sports (10 m.).....Feb. 20

Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 8103 The Spirit of West Point—B'way Brev.
 (20 m.).....Nov. 28
 8105 Vaudeville Days—B'way Brev. (20 m.).....Dec. 19
 8002 The Fighting Engineers—Special (20m) (re.).....Jan. 2
 8003 Young and Beautiful—Special (20 m.).....Jan. 30
 8107 Little Isles of Freedom—B'way Brev. (20 m.).....Feb. 13
 8108 Our African Frontiers—B'way Brev. (20m).....Feb. 27

**NEWSWEEKLY
NEW YORK
RELEASE DATE****Pathe News**

- 35137 Sat. (O.).....Jan. 2
 35238 Wed. (E.).....Jan. 6
 35139 Sat. (O.).....Jan. 9
 35240 Wed. (E.).....Jan. 13
 35141 Sat. (O.).....Jan. 16
 35242 Wed. (E.).....Jan. 20
 35143 Sat. (O.).....Jan. 23
 35244 Wed. (E.).....Jan. 27
 35145 Sat. (O.).....Jan. 30
 35246 Wed. (E.).....Feb. 3
 35147 Sat. (O.).....Feb. 6

Universal

- 150 Friday.....Jan. 1
 151 Wednesday.....Jan. 6
 152 Friday.....Jan. 8
 153 Wednesday.....Jan. 13
 154 Friday.....Jan. 15
 155 Wednesday.....Jan. 20
 156 Friday.....Jan. 22
 157 Wednesday.....Jan. 27
 158 Friday.....Jan. 29
 159 Wednesday.....Feb. 3
 160 Friday.....Feb. 5

Paramount News

- 37 Saturday.....Jan.
 38 Wednesday.....Jan.
 39 Saturday.....Jan. 9
 40 Wednesday.....Jan. 13
 41 Saturday.....Jan. 16
 42 Wednesday.....Jan. 20
 43 Saturday.....Jan. 23
 44 Wednesday.....Jan. 27
 45 Saturday.....Jan. 30
 46 Wednesday.....Feb. 3
 47 Saturday.....Feb. 6

Metrotone News

- 233 Tuesday.....Jan. 5
 234 Thursday.....Jan. 7
 235 Tuesday.....Jan. 12
 236 Thursday.....Jan. 14
 237 Tuesday.....Jan. 19
 238 Thursday.....Jan. 21
 239 Tuesday.....Jan. 26
 240 Thursday.....Jan. 28
 241 Tuesday.....Feb. 2
 242 Thursday.....Feb. 4
 243 Tuesday.....Feb. 9

Fox Movietone

- 34 Saturday.....Jan. 2
 35 Wednesday.....Jan. 6
 36 Saturday.....Jan. 9
 37 Wednesday.....Jan. 13
 38 Saturday.....Jan. 16
 39 Wednesday.....Jan.
 40 Saturday.....Jan.
 41 Wednesday.....Jan. 27
 42 Saturday.....Jan. 30
 43 Wednesday.....Feb. 3

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9, 1943

No. 2

We Must Plan Intelligently to Survive

The motion picture industry has started off the new year by having its use of raw film stock trimmed another seven percent by the War Production Board.

Under the new ruling the major producers are ordered to reduce their use of film to approximately seventy-five percent of the amount they used in 1941, while the smaller producers must cut their film consumption to approximately eighty-seven percent of the amount they used during that same year.

This ruling does not come as a surprise to the industry; it was inevitable. That future rulings may reduce even further Hollywood's allotment of film, seems also inevitable.

It is for that reason the producers should begin to change their scheme of things NOW. They must apply intelligence to their future production plans, in order that every foot of film be used to the fullest advantage, and in order to prevent a product curtailment from creating havoc within the business.

Many persons, particularly those in favor of single billing, will advocate a reduction, or even the elimination, of so-called "B" pictures as the first step in product curtailment. Such a policy, however, may prove to be more harmful than beneficial, because of its possible ruinous effect on thousands of exhibitors who depend on "B" product for their existence, and on whose existence the producers and distributors are equally dependent.

This condition was deftly explained by Mr. Herbert J. Yates, head of Republic Pictures, who, discussing an anticipated shortage of product, had this to say in a letter published in the November 1, 1942, issue of this paper:

"During the 30 years I have been active in the motion picture industry, I have always understood that 'A' theatres were established to play 'A' pictures plus added attractions: shorts, famous bands, stage shows, etc.; that 'B' theatres were established to play 'B' pictures—single or double bill, as well as subsequent 'A' pictures. I think it is fair to say that a larger part of the public depends on 'B' theatres than 'A' theatres. The pattern of the entertainment of each group of theatres, as well as of their audiences, is as different as day and night, and the range of admission prices is fixed accordingly.

"I believe the important industry executives will agree with the following conclusions: (1) That no large studio could profitably exist unless it made 'B' pictures and could not remain in business if it did not have 'B' pictures as a secondary market for 'A' pictures. (2) That no 'B' theatre could exist without 'B' pictures—single or double bill. (3) That it would be advisable to continue to depend on the public to decide whether it wants 'B' pictures—single or double bill, give-aways, chance games, contests, etc., thrown in as extra attractions. There is a vast difference both as to quality and price of entertainment, and it seems

to me that considering the prosperity of the industry over a long period of years, now reaching an all time high, that the public has already made its decision; and it would be unwise to tamper with that decision."

This paper is in full agreement with Mr. Yates' statement. Moreover, it sees no point in a curtailment of "B" pictures so long as millions of feet of film could be saved by the complete elimination of short subjects, other than those sponsored by the Government. A halt in the production of short subjects that contribute nothing to the war effort would serve a two-fold purpose—that of saving precious film for a more worthy purpose, and that of allowing more time for the exhibition of Government shorts.

The curtailment of feature productions should not be undertaken until all other means of saving film have been exhausted. Hollywood must take into consideration the fact that the number of features required each year by an exhibitor is controlled by the size of the community in which his theatre is located, and the type of audience he caters to. For example, a large first-run theatre in a metropolitan area may require no more than twenty to twenty-five features each year, by reason of its extended runs and transient patronage. The second-run exhibitor, however, with a theatre in the same metropolitan area, but in a neighborhood section, may require a change of program once or twice each week; first, because of his limited patronage, and second, because the extended run enjoyed by the first-run theatre had milked the product to the extent that the second-run exhibitor could not hold it at a profit for more than a few days. The lot of the subsequent-run exhibitor is much worse; often he requires a triple change of program each week.

To repeat Mr. Yates' remarks, "No large studio could profitably exist unless it made 'B' pictures and could not remain in business if it did not have 'B' theatres as a secondary market for 'A' pictures." It is for that reason the producers and distributors should protect this outlet by planning their every move intelligently, so as to assure the continued operation of every theatre, large or small. As it is, the exhibitors are having enough trouble because of fuel oil and gasoline rationing, depleted house staffs, and shifting populations. Let us not add to their burden.

We must remember, however, that the producers' responsibility for the judicious use of raw stock does not end with their elimination of subjects the public can do without. There is still the matter of "assembly-line" production methods in which pictures are ground out to meet the demands of the release schedule without regard for their careless preparation or worthless stories.

But that is the basis of another topic, based on personal observations while in Hollywood, and which I will discuss in the following issue.

"A Night to Remember" with Loretta Young and Brian Aherne

(Columbia, December 10; time, 90 min.)

Most audiences should find this murder mystery-comedy a satisfying entertainment, even though the story is thin, and at times the comedy and suspense is a bit too labored. What it lacks in story values it makes up for in amusing situations and gags. The story is a mixed affair of murder and blackmail in which most of the action takes place in a basement apartment in Greenwich Village where live a none-too-brave young married couple, who seek to unravel the mystery surrounding the drowning of a stranger in their bathtub. The usual tricks have been employed to give it an eerie atmosphere, all of which adds to the comedy. The acting and direction is competent:—

Loretta Young and Brian Aherne, her author-husband, move into a basement apartment in Greenwich Village, so that he may find the proper atmosphere for his new mystery novel. Other occupants in the building are Don Costello, the landlord; Jeff Donnell and William Wright, her husband; Lee Patrick, a divorcee and cafe-owner; Blanche Yurka, the housekeeper; and Richard Gaines—all of whom puzzle Aherne because of their strange behavior. While making a telephone call at Lee's cafe, Loretta overhears a man in the next booth threateningly insist that someone meet him in her apartment. She hurries to her table and informs Aherne of the incident. Aherne questions the man, but the stranger resents it, and knocks him down. Aherne learns that the man is a notorious character named "Kaufman." Returning home, the young couple wake in the morning to find the police, headed by Sidney Toler, in their apartment; "Kaufman's" body had been found in a courtyard adjoining their apartment. All the tenants are suspected, including Aherne, who sets out to unravel the crime, despite the fears of Loretta and the disgust of Toler. Meanwhile the other tenants meet, and their conversation reveals that all had been paying blackmail to "Kaufman," because of their shady pasts; they felt that one of their number had committed the murder. Through Lee, Aherne learns of a mysterious "Mr. Bruhl." He traces the man to a rooming house operated by Gale Sondergaard, who tries to make it appear as if the name "Bruhl" was a pseudonym of "Kaufman." Aherne cleverly disproves this, and informs his fellow-tenants that "Bruhl" and not "Kaufman" had been blackmailing them, but that no one, not even themselves, knew who "Bruhl" was. That night the killer attempts to murder Aherne, but the police arrive in time to save him. It is revealed that "Bruhl" is Gaines, one of the tenants.

Richard Flourny and Jack Henley wrote the screen play, Samuel Bischoff produced it, and Richard Wallace directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Dead Men Walk" with George Zucco and Mary Carlisle

(Producers Releasing Corp., February 10; time, 63 min.)

This program horror melodrama should appeal to the followers of pictures of this type. Based on the vampire theme—that of a corpse walking the earth and attacking human beings for their blood—the story presents nothing novel, and the treatment follows a formula. Even though the identity of the vampire is known, the suspense is sustained well since one fears lest he make good his threat to kill the heroine. One is not repulsed by the vampire's acts, since they are shown through indirection. George Zucco handles his dual role to good effect. The usual eerie effects are employed:—

Only Dr. Clayton (George Zucco), Gayle (Mary Carlisle), his niece, and Dr. Bentley (Nedrick Young), Gayle's fiancé, attend the funeral of Elwyn Clayton (also George Zucco), Dr. Clayton's twin brother, who had been hated and feared by the villagers, because of his belief in black magic. Kate (Fern Emmett), an unbalanced but harmless old woman, maintained that Elwyn had murdered her grandchild. When Dr. Clayton, who had been hated by his brother, destroys

Elwyn's books on occultism, Zolarr (Dwight Frye), Elwyn's hunchback servant, accuses him of murdering Elwyn. Zolarr removes Elwyn's body from the family vault, and the corpse comes to life, able to live from dusk to dawn on the blood of humans. He visits Dr. Clayton one night, and informs him that he planned to practice his vampirism on Gayle. Dr. Clayton shoots at the apparition, but to no avail. As Gayle wastes away, Dr. Bentley suspects that Dr. Clayton is the cause of her condition. Aroused by a few mysterious murders, the villagers, too, suspect him when one of them sees the vampire and believes it is Dr. Clayton. Elwyn, however, appears before Dr. Bentley, who realizes the truth. Kate gives Gayle a gold cross to wear about her neck as a charm against Elwyn, and informs Dr. Clayton that the vampire can be destroyed by fire only. Later, Kate is murdered by Zolarr when she discovers the hiding place of Elwyn's body. Zolarr removes Elwyn's body to his former laboratory. Enraged at Kate's murder, the townspeople head for Dr. Clayton's home. The doctor, however, had discovered Elwyn's hiding place, and was at the laboratory desperately holding on to Elwyn while fire, started by an overturned lamp, devours them both. The villagers realize that the doctor had died so that they might live in peace.

Fred Myton wrote the screen play, Sigmund Neufeld produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it.

Too horrifying for children.

"Mug Town" with the Dead End Kids and Little Tough Guys

(Universal, Jan. 22; time, 59 min.)

An average "Kid" melodrama, which, except for its locale, differs little from the previous "Kid" pictures, either in action or in comedy; it is a suitable supporting feature. This time the boys leave the city slums, go to a small town, and there they settle down and mend their ways, only to become the innocent victims of a "hi-jacking" racket. Needless to say, the boys extricate themselves and, with the usual heroics, bring the culprits to justice. There is quite a bit of human interest in the story, and the action is swift:—

Billy Halop, Huntz Hall, Bernard Punsley, and Gabriel Dell start a fight, in a Bowery hotel, in defense of Tommy Kelly, a sickly youngster. Run out of town, the boys hop a freight train. They learn from Tommy that he had run away from home because of Dick Hogan, his older brother, who took advantage of him. Tommy is accidentally killed while trying to escape from a brakeman, and the boys go to his home town where they meet Virginia Brissac, his mother. Unable to break the news to her, they tell her that Tommy is well. She invites the boys to stay with her, and gives Billy a job in a trucking garage, which she owned jointly with Jed Prouty. Billy's pals sell magazine subscriptions, and eventually buy an old car. Unknown to Billy, Hogan, who, too, worked in the garage, acted as a tipster to "hi-jackers" on valuable truck shipments. One night Billy's pals overhear Hogan plotting with Paul Fix and Edward Norris, gangsters, to steal a truck and make it appear as if Billy was guilty. After rushing to inform Billy, the boys see a suspicious looking truck leave the garage. They give chase in their car, and come upon the truck parked by the roadside with Hogan and Norris removing valuable furs. In the ensuing fight, Hogan is shot, and Norris meets death when his car crashes while making a getaway. The boys take Hogan to a doctor, and then hop a freight car; they did not want to hurt Hogan's mother by revealing the truth about her son. But they are pulled off the train by detectives, and returned to town. Learning the truth about Tommy's death and Hogan's crime, Miss Brissac forgives the boys. The "Kids" suddenly disappear, only to return wearing the uniform of the U. S. Army.

Brenda Weisberg, Lewis Amster, Harold Tarshis, and Henry Sucher wrote the screen play, Ken Goldsmith produced it, and Ray Taylor directed it. Included in the cast is Grace MacDonald, Murray Alper and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Three Hearts for Julia" with Ann Sothorn and Melvyn Douglas

(MGM, no release date set; time, 89 min.)

An entertaining domestic comedy, with a particular appeal for sophisticated audiences, but it never rises much above the level of program fare. The fault lies in the story, which is so commonplace that each development is obvious to the spectator. It is the oft-told story of a discarded husband, who vies with other men for the attentions of his wife, and the action is confined to the usual romantic involvements. Ann Sothorn's role is a departure from her "Maisee" antics; she enacts the part of a demure wife, who rebels against her husband's continual absence. The symphonic musical interpolations are good:—

Returning to New York after a prolonged absence, Melvyn Douglas, foreign correspondent, finds that Ann Sothorn, his wife, had resumed her career as a violinist, and had filed divorce papers against him. Moreover, he finds his home overrun by women musicians who interfere with his attempts to effect a reconciliation. Meanwhile Ann confesses to Reginald Owen, a family friend, that she is seriously considering the attentions of Lee Bowman, orchestra manager, and Richard Ainley, music critic. Stymied, Douglas seeks the advice of Owen, who suggests a change of tactics in which Douglas should express approval of the divorce. Owen felt that such an attitude will confuse Ann and make her change her mind. But Ann takes Douglas at his word and asks him to help her choose between Bowman and Ainley. When Douglas' attempts to break up their relationship fails, he virtually kidnaps Ann, taking her to a secluded cabin on a lake shore. There he holds her against her will, and tells her to think the matter over in quiet solitude. Ann manages to contact Ainley, who takes her back home. Meanwhile Douglas learns that, as a reserve officer, he must report for duty. He tries to see Ann, but to no avail. Disconsolate, he visits a small bar, where he meets Felix Bressart, eminent conductor of the symphony orchestra in which Ann played. The two men become friends. Realizing that Ann was still in love with Douglas, Bressart arranges for the orchestra to play at an army camp where he succeeds in bringing the two together.

Lionel Houser wrote the screen play, John W. Considine, Jr., produced it, and Richard Thorpe directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Kid Dynamite" with the East Side Kids

(Monogram, February 5; time, 66 min.)

A fair addition to the "East Side Kids" series of program melodramas. It contains some human interest, and the usual rowdy antics of the "Kids" for comedy, but on the whole it is not a wholesome entertainment; among other things, the "Kids" are shown gambling in a pool room and plotting a robbery. With the exception of Bobby Jordan, the "Kids" are cast in unsympathetic roles. They are depicted as a group of weaklings dominated by Leo Gorcey, a young thug, who would stop at nothing to gain what he wanted; his regeneration toward the end does not impress one. It is too bad that Monogram put the "Kids" in material of this type; it does not do them any good, nor does it do so to Monogram:—

Leo Gorcey, champion boxer of the East Side, is scheduled to fight the West Side champ. In a pool game just before the match, he cheats Gabriel Dell, a young thug. In retaliation, Dell arranges to have Gorcey kidnapped before the bout. Bobby Jordan substitutes for Gorcey and wins the match. Believing that Bobby was responsible for his kidnapping, Gorcey tries to pick a fight with him, but Bobby, who loved Pamela Blake, Gorcey's sister, refuses to fight in the streets. Gorcey's feelings against Bobby is heightened when he and his girl-friend are disqualified in a "jitterbug" contest, and Bobby and Pamela win the prize. Bobby joins the Army, and becomes engaged to Pamela. Determined not to be outdone, Gorcey asks his mother for permission to enlist so that he can prove that he could get a higher rating

than Bobby. His mother considers his reasons for enlisting selfish, and refuses him. To prove to his gang that he dominated Bobby, even though he was now a soldier, Gorcey orders Bobby to stand watch while the gang steals some tires. Bobby accepts the assignment good-naturedly, and manages to thwart the robbery. When Gorcey threatens him for disobeying his orders, Bobby gives him a sound thrashing. Gorcey realizes his mistake, and offers Bobby his friendship. Gorcey's mother gives him permission to join the Navy and fight for his country. Pamela joins the WAACS.

Gerald Schnitzer wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman and Barney Sarecky produced it, and Wallace Fox directed it. The cast includes Huntz Hall, Sammy Morrison, Bobby Stone, Daphne Pollard, Vince Barnett, Henry Hall and others.

Objectionable for children.

"The Immortal Sergeant" with Henry Fonda, Thomas Mitchell and Maureen O'Hara

(20th Century-Fox, January 29; time, 90 min.)

A good war drama. It is a character study of a shy introspective man, who, inspired by his sergeant who dies in action, and braced by the responsibility of leading a lost desert patrol to safety, becomes a hero and overcomes his timidity. Although it does not reach great dramatic heights, and it is somewhat long drawn out, the production and the performances are so good that one's interest is held consistently. Throughout the action the flashback technique is employed when the hero's thoughts carry him back to the girl he loves. These flashbacks serve to accentuate his innate courage, for in civilian life he is revealed to have been an unobtrusive sort, one who was too bewildered to combat the inroads made on his romance by a brash literary friend. Most of the action takes place in the Libyan desert where the sufferings of humans in desert warfare is grimly depicted. The skirmishes between the British and Nazi patrols have been handled with skill, providing many tense and exciting moments. The picture is by no means a cheerful entertainment, but it should do well at the box-office:—

Among a group of fourteen British soldiers commanded by Sergeant Thomas Mitchell, a World War veteran, are Corporal Henry Fonda, shy Canadian writer; and Privates Melville Cooper, Morton Lowry, Bramwell Fletcher, and Allyn Joslyn. While on patrol duty in the desert, the group is attacked by Italian planes, which wreck their equipment and kill eight men. Mitchell informs Fonda that the trucks were out of gas, and that the patrol was lost. At dusk they are spotted by a British plane. The pilot drops food and a note instructing them to move northeast, but to beware of a Nazi armored car six miles distant. Mitchell evolves a plan to wipe out the Nazi and capture the car. The attack is successful, but the car blows up during the skirmish. Mortally wounded, Mitchell turns his command over to Fonda, then kills himself. After days of trekking across the desert, the patrol, weakened by lack of food and water, comes to an oasis occupied by a Nazi patrol. Guiding himself by what he thinks Mitchell would have done, Fonda, under cover of darkness, crawls into the Nazi camp and steals food and water for his men. Taking advantage of a sandstorm, Fonda and his men attack the Nazis. During the battle an ammunition dump blows up and destroys the camp. Fonda awakes in a Cairo hospital to learn that a British patrol had rescued him, and that he was to be decorated. Reginald Gardiner, war correspondent and Fonda's rival for the love of Maureen O'Hara, enters the hospital to get Fonda's story. Fonda, his timidity gone, orders Gardiner in no uncertain terms to cable Maureen that he expects her to marry him. Gardiner meekly obeys. Fonda returns to London where Maureen awaits him.

Lamarr Trotti wrote the screen play and produced it. John Stahl directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

EXHIBITOR PROBLEMS THAT NEED ATTENTION IN 1943

The following is part of a release, sent out on December 25 by Mr. Abram F. Myers, chief counsel of Allied States Association:

"THE INDUSTRY SURVIVED"

"During the year the problems of the industry and of all engaged therein multiplied. A limitation was put on the cost of sets, but the releases have been well mounted. Stars have gone to war, but the pictures have been well acted. Raw stock and transportation have been curtailed, yet there has been no reported instance of a miss-out. Exhibitors in so-called defense areas have prospered to the extent that ever-increasing film rentals would permit. Exhibitors in non-defense areas have suffered from both a falling off in attendance and from increased film rentals. The solution of their problem must be carried over into the new year. The major producer-distributors have enjoyed an unprecedented popularity.

"The last best chance of securing self-regulation, stability and peace—UMPI—after a short period of coddling was finally put to death. Who shot Cock Robin is a popular guessing game among those who feel that Thurman Arnold's sudden about-face was not altogether spontaneous. In any case, the murder ostensibly was committed for the highest motives—to prevent a return to block booking and blind selling. But it is ironical that complaints are now being raised that distributors are peddling as many as three groups of feature pictures linked together—15 in all—without any cancellation privilege whatever. That is what Allied predicted would happen. What are the assassins of UMPI going to do about it?

"The greed of the producer-distributors for higher and still higher film rentals is the greatest problem facing the exhibitors as we pass into 1943. It is painfully evident that the major companies do not intend to ease the strain; on the contrary, they have made it plain that they intend to extract from the exhibitors the last possible penny. What the industry needs is a practical, self-imposed ceiling on film rentals that will keep it in line with the industries that are subject to Government-imposed price ceilings. If that is not soon forthcoming, the growing demand for Government regulation will break into the open.

"In combatting high film rentals the information service supplied by the Caravan will play a major part. Support of the program should intensify and spread during 1943."

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BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCES

(The previous box-office performances were printed in the issues of October 10 and October 17, 1942.)

Columbia

"Counter Espionage": Fair-Poor.
 "Spirit of Stanford": Fair-Poor.
 "A Man's World": Poor.
 "Lucky Legs": Fair-Poor.
 "The Daring Young Man": Fair.
 "Smith of Minnesota": Fair-Poor.
 "The Boogie Man Will Get You": Fair.
 "Stand By All Networks": Fair-Poor.
 "Boston Blackie Goes Hollywood": Fair.
 "Laugh Your Blues Away": Fair.
 "You Were Never Lovelier": Very Good-Good.

Eleven pictures, excluding four westerns, have been checked with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 1; Fair, 4; Fair-Poor, 5; Poor, 1.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"Cairo": Good-Fair.
 "Seven Sweethearts": Good.
 "Eyes In The Night": Good-Fair.
 "White Cargo": Very Good.
 "The Omaha Trail": Good-Fair.
 "For Me and My Gal": Very Good.

Six pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 2; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 3.

Paramount

"The Forest Rangers": Very Good.
 "Road to Morocco": Excellent-Very Good.
 "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch": Fair.
 "Henry Aldrich, Editor": Fair.
 "Street of Chance": Good-Fair.
 "Palm Beach Story": Very Good-Good.
 "Wrecking Crew": Fair.
 "The Avengers": Fair-Poor.
 "My Heart Belongs to Daddy": Good-Fair.

Nine pictures have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 3; Fair-Poor, 1.

RKO

"Scattergood Survives a Murder": Fair-Poor.
 "The Navy Comes Through": Good.
 "The Falcon's Brother": Good-Fair.
 "Seven Days Leave": Very Good-Good.
 "Once Upon a Honeymoon": Very Good-Good.
 "Army Surgeon": Fair.
 "Cat People": Good-Fair.
 "The Great Gildersleeve": Fair.
 "Seven Miles from Alcatraz": Good-Fair.

Nine pictures, excluding one western, have been checked with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 2; Fair-Poor, 1.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16, 1943

No. 3

There Is No Justification for Bad "B" Pictures

In last week's editorial this paper stressed the importance of planning our future production schedules with intelligence, because of the limited amount of raw stock recently allotted to the industry by the War Production Board. It also suggested that the producers discontinue production on all short subjects, other than those sponsored by the government, in order to save as much film as possible in behalf of feature productions. Particular reference was made to "B" features, the elimination of which is being urged by the advocates of single-billing as the first step in the curtailment of product.

This paper pointed out that thousands of exhibitors who operate second and subsequent run theatres are dependent on the "B" feature for their existence, and that the continued operation of these theatres is of importance to the producers, who need this outlet as a secondary market for their "A" pictures.

The editorial said in part:

"We must remember, however, that the producers' responsibility for the judicious use of raw stock does not end with their elimination of subjects the public can do without. There is still the matter of 'assembly-line' production methods in which pictures are ground out to meet the demands of the release schedule without regard for their careless preparation or worthless stories."

The closer one gets to Hollywood production conditions the more roiled one becomes whenever another "B" picture is put into circulation; the producers continue to put into production stories that are half-baked, knowing fully well that, at best, it will emerge as just another meaningless entertainment, the sort they would advise their own families not to see if they had to pay an admission price.

While in Hollywood I have made it a point to study the situation to learn if I could find the slightest justification for so many bad "B" pictures, and I must say that I cannot find any excuse for it other than laziness and complete lack of interest on the part of production executives, who are making no effort to correct the situation.

A discussion with these executives brings out many excuses, among which are:

- (1) "Assembly-line" production methods are necessary for efficiency, and for volume production.
- (2) There exists a scarcity of creative writers of worthwhile stories.
- (3) Low budgets do not allow them to shoot well written scenes.

(4) Sets left over from "A" pictures must be utilized for the "B" pictures.

(5) There are not enough good actors in Hollywood to portray well written characterizations properly.

(6) Writers are not inspired to create their best stories for "B" standard productions.

(7) When the proportionate allotment for story costs has been consumed, additional work on the story must stop. Regardless of the shape the story is in, it goes into production.

(8) Directors are compelled to give more attention to the shooting schedules than to the quality of scenes.

(9) Good or bad—a "B" picture can get only a limited amount of money from an exhibitor—so what difference does it make?

But no matter what excuses are given by the major studios about "B" pictures' not having a chance, one does not hear excuses from the independent studios; in these studios one finds that there is no such thing as a "B" picture. The producer at an independent studio is allotted less money to produce what his studio labels an "A" picture than is allotted to a producer at a major studio to make what his studio labels a "B" picture. But the initiative of the independent studio's producer exceeds by far that of the major studio's producer, for his task is to make his picture big enough to compete with the major studio's product. As a rule you will find that, dollar for dollar, the independent studio's producer gets more value.

The system of sales is such that a major studio's "B" picture will earn profits because its production cost is set below its minimum selling standard. But such is not the case with the independent studio's picture, which must earn its income solely on the merit of production.

The low quality of "B" product released by the major studios is disgraceful, and it needs only a changed viewpoint on the part of studio executives to correct the situation.

If these executives will discontinue the "assembly-line" practice of producing "B" pictures, and demand of their producers better scripts, the quality of their "B" product would improve, and their use of precious film will not be termed wasteful. Moreover, we will satisfy the largest patronage our industry has ever enjoyed, and we will find that the casual moviegoer of today will become the steady patron of tomorrow.

"Chetniks" with Philip Dorn, Anna Sten and Virginia Gilmore

(20th Century-Fox, February 5; time, 73 min.)

Good program fare. Based on authentic incidents in the life of Draja Mihailovitch, leader of Yugoslavia's famed "Chetniks" (guerilla fighters), this war drama depicts the stubborn resistance of the Yugoslavian peasantry against the ruthless pressure of their Nazi invaders. The action, which centers around the efforts of the Nazis to capture Mihailovitch, is fast and exciting. Human interest is awakened by the sympathy one feels for the villagers, who, despite threats of starvation, refuse to endanger Mihailovitch and his family. The spectator watches with interest the battle of wits and military strategy between Mihailovitch and the Nazi chiefs. The scenes showing Mihailovitch together with his family are appealing:—

At Nazi headquarters, General Von Bauer (Felix Basch) offers a huge reward for the capture of Colonel Mihailovitch (Philip Dorn), leader of the Yugoslavian Chetniks, whose guerilla warfare tactics kept many Nazi divisions on guard constantly. Impatient with Von Bauer's methods, Colonel Brockner (Martin Kosleck), Gestapo chief, plans to capture Mihailovitch through Lubitca (Anna Sten), his wife, and Mirko (Merrill Rodin) and Nada (Patricia Prest), their children. Aware that Mihailovitch's family lived under an assumed name in the town of Kotar, Brockner decrees that no food be sold to the inhabitants until Mihailovitch's family is turned over to the Gestapo. Lubitca, touched by the people's preference to starve rather than reveal her identity, attempts to give herself up, but Natalia (Virginia Gilmore), Brockner's secretary and a loyal Yugoslavian, dissuades her. Learning of Brockner's decree, Mihailovitch visits Brockner and Van Bauer under a flag of truce and, under threat of killing Von Bauer's wife and daughter, and Brockner's mistress, whom he held as hostage, compels them to feed the townspeople. Mihailovitch soon finds his position reversed when Mirko, his son, inadvertently reveals the family's identity, and they are imprisoned as hostages. Mihailovitch is visited under a flag of truce by Von Bauer and Brockner, who threaten to kill all the women and children in Kotar unless he surrenders within eighteen hours. Executing a brilliant military maneuver, Mihailovitch and his Chetniks capture the town and liberate the people.

Jack Andrews and Edward E. Paramore wrote the screen play, Sol M. Wurtzel produced it, and Louis King directed it. The cast includes John Sheppard, Frank Lackteen, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"City Without Men" with Linda Darnell, Glenda Farrell and Edgar Buchanan

(Columbia, January 14; time, 75 min.)

Just an ordinary program melodrama. It directs some human appeal, but the story is artificial and in some parts even unpleasant. Moreover, the action is slow-moving, the surroundings sordid, and the doings of some of the characters, demoralizing. In spite of the sympathy one feels for the hero, who is unjustly imprisoned, and for the heroine, who seeks to free him, it is not enough to hold one's attention. The picture is best suited as a secondary feature in small-town and neighborhood theatres:—

While waiting at sea to guide an incoming vessel, Michael Duane, a pilot, spies the S.S. Hanseatic lowering two Japs into a rowboat. Duane picks up the men, but they force him to attempt to escape an oncoming Coast Guard cutter. Duane's boat is overtaken, and he is accused of trying to smuggle in aliens. Duane is sentenced to prison when the prosecutor proves that the S.S. Hanseatic had been sunk a year previously. Linda Darnell, Duane's fiancée, follows him to the prison town where she finds lodging in a boarding house operated by Sara Allgood, whose husband was a "lifer." Other roomers include Glenda Farrell, Leslie Brooks, Doris Dudley, and Constance Worth—all prison "widows." Linda engages Edgar Buchanan, a drink-addicted lawyer, to help win Duane's freedom. Buchanan, once an able lawyer, had been disowned by Clyde Fillmore, his brother and head of the parole board. When Duane learns of Pearl Harbor, he gets up a petition signed by most of the convicts, requesting permission to fight for their country. The petition is turned down, embittering the men. Meanwhile the prisoners' wives plot a jail-break, the success of which depends on Duane's ability to pilot a boat. Linda learns of the plot soon after the newspapers announce the discovery of a Japanese ship masquerading as the Hanseatic. She rushes to Buchanan, and compels him to plead Duane's case before his brother. In an eloquent plea, Buchanan succeeds in convincing Fillmore that not only had an injustice been done, but that he himself had sobered up. Fillmore telephones the prison in time to halt the jail break. Duane and Linda are reunited.

W. L. River wrote the screen play, B. P. Schulberg produced it, and Sidney Salkow directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"The Meanest Man in the World" with Jack Benny and Priscilla Lane

(20th Century-Fox, February 12; time, 57 min.)

For a picture featuring Jack Benny, this comedy is surprisingly short; but those fans who enjoy the particular brand of humor expounded by Benny will find it a satisfying entertainment. There is little substance to the story, which is based on a play produced some years ago by George M. Cohan; but it has several amusing situations, and the action, for the most part, keeps one chuckling. Much of the laughter is provoked by the predicaments in which Benny finds himself, as a result of his gaining a reputation as a mean lawyer. Rochester, as Benny's man-of-all-work, adds much to the entertaining qualities of the picture:—

Jack Benny, a struggling young lawyer in Pottsville, is in love with Priscilla Lane, whose father, Matt Briggs, does not approve of the romance. To prove his ability, Benny, together with Rochester, goes to New York where he rents an office. Benny's finances are nil within a few months. Learning that Priscilla and her father were coming to New York, Benny borrows on his life insurance, and sublets a Park Avenue apartment. He entertains them royally, and they return to Pottsville impressed with his success. Rochester tells Benny that he is a failure because of his kind-heartedness, and suggests that he become hard-boiled. Benny agrees to try. After insulting a few people on the street, Benny snatches a lollypop from a child, only to have a newspaper pho-

tographer catch him in the act. The picture is printed by the newspapers, and Benny gains a reputation as the meanest man in the world. Edmund Gwen, a mean old miser, retains Benny, explaining that he had been looking for just such a heartless attorney. Benny's first assignment is to dispossess Margaret Seddon, an old lady, from her home. He evicts the old lady, but secretly moves her to his luxurious apartment. The newspapers make capital of this hard-hearted eviction. To add to his troubles, the newspapers announce that he maintained a "love nest"; a reporter had telephoned Benny's apartment, and misunderstood when Miss Seddon answered the telephone. Furious, Priscilla comes to New York where a photographer snaps her picture as she strikes Benny. The newspapers label her "the love nest girl." Briggs comes to New York and, at the point of a gun, compels Benny to marry Priscilla. Immediately following the ceremony, Rochester arrives with Miss Seddon, who clears up the misunderstanding.

George Seaton and Allan House wrote the screen play, William Perlberg produced it, and Sidney Lanfield directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Shadow of a Doubt" with Teresa Wright and Joseph Cotten

(Universal, January 15; time, 108 min.)

A very good mystery drama. From the moment the picture starts until the very end, one remains engrossed in the proceedings, because of the mystifying plot and the interesting developments. Directing with his well-known flare for suspense, Alfred Hitchcock has made the most of the story, which deals with the adoration of a young small-town girl for her ingratiating big-city uncle, and the disintegration of this adoration when a web of circumstances slowly reveal to her that he is a maniacal killer wanted by the police. The action settles down to a battle of wits in which the uncle seeks to kill his niece to save himself, and the niece seeks to get him out of town lest her family, too, become disillusioned. The performances are very good:—

Seeking to elude detectives, Joseph Cotten journeys to the small-town home of Patricia Collinge, his sister, whose family, particularly Teresa Wright, her daughter, was extremely fond of him; his presence made them very happy. Detectives Macdonald Carey and Wallace Ford visit the town and, indicating that they were government men conducting a survey to find the average American family, ask Miss Collinge for permission to interview her family. She agrees, despite the objections of Cotten, who requests that he be left out of the interview. Cotten's strange behavior puzzles Teresa. That evening she keeps a date with Carey, and learns that he is a detective. Carey admits that he is shadowing Cotten, whom he suspected of murdering several wealthy widows. Teresa confirms this through newspaper clippings in a public library. Torn between her desire to see justice done, and her unwillingness to hurt her mother, Teresa asks Cotten to leave their home. Realizing that his sister's home furnished a perfect hideout for him, and that Teresa would not reveal him to his sister, Cotten refuses to leave. He makes several unsuccessful attempts on Teresa's life. Cotten finally decides to leave town. The family, including Teresa, accompanies him to the station where Teresa boards the train to show her

younger sister and brother Cotten's drawing room. The children get off the train, but Cotten manages to detain Teresa as the train starts to move. He attempts to throw her off the platform, but, instead, he himself falls out, and is killed. Teresa retains her secret.

Thornton Wilder, Sally Benson, and Alma Reville wrote the screen play, Jack H. Skirball produced it, and Alfred Hitchcock directed it. The cast includes Henry Travers, Edna May Wonacott, Hume Cronyn, and others.

Adult entertainment.

"Margin for Error" with Milton Berle, Otto Preminger and Joan Bennett

(20th Century-Fox, February 19; time, 74 min.)

This is the kind of entertainment the masses should enjoy pretty well. Adapted from Clare Boothe's Broadway stage success of several seasons ago, the story is a mixture of comedy, murder-mystery, and espionage, in which the action takes place in a German Consulate in New York City, prior to our entry into the war, and during the period the Nazi Bunds were flourishing. Much of the entertainment value the picture possesses is owed to Milton Berle; he does his best work to date with his portrayal of the Jewish policeman, who is charged with the responsibility of safeguarding the Consulate against irate citizens. This situation gives rise to many amusing moments. Some of the dialogue is quite witty:—

The assignment of Policeman Milton Berle to guard the Nazi Consulate is as distasteful to Consul Otto Preminger, as it is to Berle himself. The Consulate was a tangled household; Preminger, a ruthless man, had gambled away the Consulate's funds, and he sought to prevent Baron Carl Esmond, Consulate attache, from sending to Berlin a financial report. Joan Bennett, Preminger's Czechoslovakian wife, dared not leave him lest he harm her father—a captive in Germany. On the eve of a Hitler broadcast, Preminger is ordered to clean up his affairs and return to Berlin within forty-eight hours. He arranges for a pre-broadcast dinner, at which time he plans to dispose of Esmond, as well as Howard Freeman, Bund leader, who was no longer useful to him. Before the dinner, Preminger dispatches saboteurs to blow up a pier immediately following Hitler's speech. As all listen to the broadcast after dinner, Joan sneaks up behind Preminger, and shoots him. The others do not hear the shot because of the booming radio. Berle enters the room with a message for Preminger, and finds him dead. Joan confesses, but Esmond, protectively, insists that it was he who did it. The confusion is heightened when it is discovered that Preminger was not only shot, but stabbed and poisoned. While the investigation continues, Esmond slips out of the building, and orders the saboteurs to get the explosives off the pier. While the plotters remove the dynamite, Esmond telephones the police, who arrive in time to arrest them. Berle clears up the murder by proving that Preminger had killed himself when he inadvertently drank poisoned whiskey meant for Esmond. Joan and Esmond denounce Nazism for Americanism.

Lillian Hayward wrote the screen play, Ralph Dietrich produced it, and Otto Preminger directed it. The cast includes Clyde Fillmore, Poldy Dur, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

THE \$25,000 NET SALARY RULING MEETS ITS FIRST CHALLENGE

In Los Angeles, Hedy Lamarr has filed suit in Superior Court asking for abrogation of her optional contract with Loew's, Inc., on the grounds that the company had failed to increase her salary from \$1500 a week to \$2000 a week as provided for in her contract. According to the complaint, the studio had notified Miss Lamarr that it was keeping her under contract for another year, but, because of the government's \$25,000 net salary ruling, it would not grant her the \$500 increase stipulated in her contract.

Government circles, as well as industry circles, are of the opinion that the case may eventually be tried in a Federal Court, in which case it would be a direct challenge of the constitutionality of the Government's salary edict.

The industry will watch the case with interest, for on the decision depends the validity of many Hollywood contracts.

THE BRITISH VIEWPOINT

I am indebted to Mr. C. H. Whincup, a British subscriber, for his having sent me the following interesting editorial extracted from the November 16, 1942, issue of "The Yorkshire Post," a prominent British morning newspaper with a wide circulation:

"HOW HOLLYWOOD MIGHT HELP"

"Mrs. Roosevelt was asked during her visit to Edinburgh about efforts designed to illustrate for British people various facets of American life. She replied, very sensibly, that it would be an excellent plan for Hollywood to make films which would portray American life authentically and sincerely. At a time when there is so much need to foster Anglo-American understanding this is clearly a task that Hollywood could most usefully undertake. Most of us in this country have learnt a good deal about the United States from the films, but the impressions gained have been partial and in many respects misleading.

"There is a fairly obvious reason for this. Most people have liked to go to the cinema largely in order to escape from their own humdrum existences into highly coloured regions of excitement and romance. But in war-time this objection has less force. Drama and urgency have invaded daily life. The immense success in the United States of the British film, 'Mrs. Miniver,' shows that American audiences are eager to see how ordinary families in this country are reacting to the stress of war. Hollywood has indeed been prompted to make an American counterpart. 'The War Against Mrs. Hadley,' which seems to be doing very well in London just now. This is a line of development that should certainly be followed up; and American producers may be the more inclined to follow it up because of the drastic restrictions on their production costs and resources imposed by war-time measures of Government control. They are having to pare their budgets to the bone, and will be looking for domestic subjects suitable for treatment on a modest scale.

"Artistic enterprise may gain rather than suffer from this austerity regime; the cinema has always been far too apt to stifle imagination under a burden of spectacular display. If Hollywood is now driven to make drama out of the lives of ordinary folk, we may get some films which will at last do justice to many valuable and neglected aspects of American civilisation."

BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCES

Twentieth Century-Fox

"Berlin Correspondent": Good-Fair.
 "Careful, Soft Shoulders": Fair.
 "Just Off Broadway": Good-Fair.
 "Iceland": Very Good.
 "Girl Trouble": Good.
 "Manila Calling": Good-Fair.
 "The Man in the Trunk": Fair-Poor.
 "Tales of Manhattan": Very Good.
 "Springtime in the Rockies": Very Good.
 "That Other Woman": Fair-Poor.
 "Thunder Birds": Good.
 "The Undying Monster": Fair-Poor.
 "The Black Swan": Very Good.
 "Dr. Renault's Secret": Fair-Poor.

Fourteen pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 4; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 3; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 4.

United Artists

"The Moon and Sixpence": Good.
 "The Devil with Hitler": Fair.
 "One of Our Aircraft Is Missing": Very Good-Good.
 "I Married a Witch": Very Good-Good.
 "Silver Queen": Good.
 "Fall In": Fair-Poor.
 "American Empire": Good-Fair.

Seven pictures have been checked with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 2; Good, 2; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 1.

Universal

"Sin Town": Good-Fair.
 "Get Hep to Love": Good-Fair.
 "Destination Unknown": Fair.
 "Moonlight in Havana": Fair.
 "The Mummy's Tomb": Fair.
 "Night Monster": Fair.
 "Arabian Nights": Very Good.
 "Who Done It?": Very Good.
 "Nightmare": Good-Fair.
 "Strictly in the Groove": Fair.
 "Pittsburgh": Good.
 "Behind the Eight Ball": Fair.
 "Madame Spy": Fair.
 "The Great Impersonation": Fair.
 "Mug Town": Fair-Poor.
 "When Johnny Comes Marching Home": Good-Fair.

Sixteen pictures, excluding two westerns, have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 2; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 4; Fair, 8; Fair-Poor, 1.

Warner-First National

"You Can't Escape Forever": Good-Fair.
 "Secret Enemies": Fair-Poor.
 "Now, Voyager": Very Good.
 "The Hidden Hand": Fair-Poor.
 "Gentleman Jim": Very Good-Good.
 "George Washington Slept Here": Very Good.
 Six pictures have been checked with the following results:
 Very Good, 2; Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair-Poor, 2.

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THE ST. LOUIS BLUES

In its January 13 issue, *The Exhibitor* has reproduced an advertisement, taken from a St. Louis newspaper dated December 31, in which the Fanchon and Marco theatres announce "4 of the greatest entertainment programs ever offered in America—to help you and your family welcome a victorious New Year!" The advertisement listed the New Year's Eve program of the Fox, Ambassador, Missouri and St. Louis theatres from 5 P.M. to closing, except for the St. Louis theatre where the program started at 6:30 P.M. Following is the program offering of each theatre:

FOX: (1) "George Washington Slept Here." (2) Four Walt Disney shorts, including "Der Fuehrer's Face." (3) "Street of Chance." (4) "The Great Impersonation." (5) "Eyes of the Underworld." (6) "Road to Morocco."

AMBASSADOR: (1) "Arabian Nights." (2) "Seven Days Leave." (3) "Pittsburgh." (4) "You Can't Escape Forever." (5) "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." (6) "Once Upon a Honeymoon."

MISSOURI: (1) "Seven Days Leave." (2) Four Walt Disney shorts, including "Der Fuehrer's Face." (3) "Pittsburgh." (4) "The Black Swan." (5) "Forest Rangers." (6) "George Washington Slept Here."

ST. LOUIS: (1) "Behind the Eight Ball." (2) "Mug Town." (3) "Escape From Crime." (4) "Madame Spy." (5) "Most Dangerous Game." (6) "Cat People."

Directing his remarks to "the WPB, Lowell Mellett, Distributors and everyone else interested in film conservation," Mr. Jay Emanuel, publisher of *The Exhibitor*, had this to say:

"The advertisement which appears on this page is from a St. Louis newspaper dated December 31.

"To our mind, it is the most outrageous thing of its kind that we have ever witnessed in the motion picture industry, and we have been in it 30 years.

"To us it represents not only a monstrous dissipation of pictures but it becomes a challenge to everyone who wishes to conserve film or place this business on a sane, all-out for the war basis.

"In all the history of the business we have never seen anything like it. As an exhibitor we would want to know how the exchanges ever agreed to it, and at what terms. As a publisher, we protest against this practice which places meritorious offerings of the industry on the same plane as close-outs in a bargain basement. As an American interested in the successful conclusion of the war, we condemn such waste of film.

"We refuse to believe that business is so bad in St. Louis that patrons must be given such attractions to go to theatres.

"This, we think, marks the ultimate in 'big combination' shows.

"It might be noted here also that through the entire city shows of three and four features were common on New Year's Eve.

"This is a tragedy. Let us hope that it will not go unchallenged, and that those who have the interest of the industry at heart will take steps to stop it. Shame on those who perpetrated this outrage!

"This challenge cannot go unheeded."

HARRISON'S REPORTS concurs whole-heartedly with Jay Emanuel's remarks; there is absolutely no excuse for this flagrant waste of product in these times of film conservation, or, for that matter, at any other time.

In these days when our industry is enjoying the greatest boom in its history, when an entertainment-hungry public is forming long queues outside our box-offices on mid-week nights, this paper can see no reason why any theatre has to offer six features in order to induce the public to come in. It is even more difficult to comprehend why any theatre would resort to such a policy on, of all nights, New Year's Eve, the one night in the year exhibitors have the least trouble to jam their theatres to capacity, no matter what feature or two features they may be showing.

The fact that this unpatriotic dissipation of product took place in St. Louis, is shocking. It was soon after Lowell Mellett's "anti-dual" speech that ninety-five percent of the theatres in this area voluntarily adopted a resolution for the elimination of double billing, because "it became a patriotic duty to curtail our activities in the name of the War Effort." Even more astounding is the fact that this resolution was adopted under the leadership of Harry C. Arthur, Jr., managing director of the Fanchon and Marco theatres, the very circuit that chose to exhibit, in one evening, no less than five or six features, as well as shorts, in each of its four St. Louis theatres.

Can be it be that Mr. Arthur was "kidding" when, in a letter published in the December 26, 1942 issue of the *Motion Picture Herald*, he said in part:

"I believe that the action we here in St. Louis have taken, i.e., the resolution to adopt single feature programs for the duration beginning no later than June 1, 1943, clearly indicates my personal stand.

"So long as it remained purely an economic question, it was difficult to solve; there were always those exhibitors anxious to take advantage of a situation, in the knowledge that fans greatly prefer virtually any double program, to a single feature.

"The new aspect of the situation is altogether different. The motion picture is frankly faced with the problem of a cut of approximately 40% of its raw stock in 1943. . . . There is little choice on our part. To continue to play double-feature programs when all theatres in an area agree to feature single films is to hinder the nation's war efforts.

"Showmanship is the answer to the problem. Any showman who can sell his patrons on some of the product he finds himself playing, is certainly capable of selling his patrons on the single feature program for the duration.

(Continued on last page)

"Silver Skates" with Patricia Morison, Kenny Baker and Belita

(Monogram, February 18; time, 74 min.)

As compared with previous ice spectacles produced by the major studios, Monogram's "Silver Skates" is not only as good, but in many respects far superior. One does not have to be a figure-skating devotee to be thrilled by the ease and grace with which the skating stars execute the brilliant skating routines. Particularly fine is the performance of Belita, who not only proves herself a skating star of the first magnitude, but a capable actress as well. Equally as good are Eugene Turner, Belita's skating partner, and Irene Dare and Danny Shaw, ten-year-old youngsters, whose skating talents will thrill the spectator. Audiences will enjoy the comedy skating routines of Frick and Frack. The musical background, played by Ted Fiorita's orchestra, is tuneful, and a few of the songs are outstanding. Little footage is wasted on the inconsequential story, which merely serves to connect the skating sequences. Kenny Baker, who does some very good singing, and Patricia Morison, who is a charming actress, add much to the entertainment values. The production background is lavish:—

Patricia Morison, owner of an ice show, is faced with bankruptcy when Belita, the show's star, plans to leave to get married. Kenny Baker, singer with the show, is in love with Patricia, but she will not marry him until the show's finances are assured. Patricia is attracted to Irene Dare, a ten-year-old refugee from Holland, and seeks to adopt her. Meanwhile Baker had become attentive to Belita in order to induce her to remain with the show, and to make Patricia jealous so that she would marry him soon. Before Baker realizes it, he finds himself engaged to both Belita and Patricia. One day Patricia notices Irene doing some sensational ice skating, and decides to make her the star of the show. Paul McVey, an agent, "catches" the show and offers Patricia a forty weeks' contract. Baker's difficulties are straightened out when Belita returns to her boy-friend. Patricia marries Kenny, and they adopt Irene.

Jerry Caddy wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it. The cast includes Frank Faylen, Joyce Compton, Donald Kerr and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Cinderella Swings It" with Guy Kibbee and Gloria Warren

(RKO, February 26; time, 69 min.)

Gloria Warren's pleasant singing voice lifts this home-spun comedy-drama above the entertainment level of the other pictures in the "Scattergood Baines" series. The story is just another variation of the small-town-girl-makes-good theme, in which Guy Kibbee, in his usual role as the kindly benefactor, helps Gloria to attain success. Most of the footage is just a build-up for the closing scenes, during which a vaudeville-type show is performed. All in all, it is a wholesome entertainment, best suited for small-town patronage as a supporting feature:—

To help the war effort, Guy Kibbee donates a large tract of land in Coldriver to the Army, organizes a civilian defense group, and aids Dick Hogan and Helen Parrish to prepare a home-talent show for the USO. Leonid Kinskey, local voice teacher, takes Gloria Warren, his niece, to New York for an audition with Pierre Watkin, Broadway producer. But Gloria's operatic singing does not impress Watkin, and she sadly returns to Coldriver. Kibbee and Hogan persuade Gloria to appear in the show. A romance springs up between Gloria and Hogan, thereby arousing the jealousy of Helen, who considered Hogan her property. Kibbee induces Gloria to learn "swing" singing; he felt that her operatic style lacked popular appeal. Learning that Kinskey was penniless, because he had staked everything on Gloria's

success, Kibbee decides to do something about it. Accordingly, he goes to New York and inveigles Watkin, a noted fisherman, to come to Coldriver to fish. In clever fashion Kibbee makes Watkin's fishing expedition a success and, juggling train schedules so that the producer has several hours to spare, induces him to attend the USO show. Despite the hindrances put in her way by the jealous Helen, Gloria appears, and her switch from classical to swing music proves to be the hit of the show. Watkin promptly engages her for his forthcoming Broadway production.

Michael L. Simmons wrote the screen play, Jerrold T. Brandt produced it, and Christy Cabanne directed it. The cast includes Willie Best, Billy Lenhart, Kenneth Brown and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Forever and a Day" with an all-star cast

(RKO, March 19; time, 104 min.)

Very good! A production more than a year in the making, this is an absorbing drama, lavishly and artistically produced, with an appeal for all types of audiences. The film embraces the combined talents of no less than eighty top stars and featured players, twenty-one writers, seven producer-directors, and a score of technical experts—all of whom have donated their services in the name of charity. Present arrangements call for President Roosevelt to designate the wartime charity, which will be the recipient of all profits over and above the cost of production and distribution realized by the film. It is a stirring story about an English house and the people it sheltered from the time it was built in 1804 to the time it is demolished by a Nazi bomb in this war. Rich in humor, and tragic in drama, the history of the structure is related in episodic fashion, in which the various episodes depict the feuds, the loves, the disappointments, and the joys of the successive generations of families that occupied the house during its lifetime. Each episode is filled with colorful characterizations enacted by separate groups of actors, all of whom give inspired performances. Its marquee strength, as well as the film's own merits, should make it one of the outstanding box-office pictures of the year.

The story opens in London, during the Luftwaffe bombings in 1941, where Kent Smith, American newspaperman, about to return to the United States, receives a cable instructing him to arrange for the sale of an old English house owned by his London-born father. Smith reaches the house just as another raid begins, and in the cellar of the building, now used for an air-raid shelter, he meets Ruth Warwick, the tenant, who wanted to buy the building. Smith frankly tells her that he could see no point in buying a house that is apt to be bombed at any moment. In an effort to convince him that she is serious, that to her the house is a shrine of memories, a living page from Britain's annals, she tells him the story of the old structure's history, which unfolds in a series of flashbacks.

The producer-directors include Rene Clair, Edmund Goulding, Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Frank Lloyd, Victor Saville, Robert Stevenson, and Herbert Wilcox. The cast includes Herbert Marshall, Ray Milland, Claude Rains, Anna Neagle, Charles Laughton, Brian Aherne, Victor McLaglen, Anna Lee, Ida Lupino, Merle Oberon, Billy Bevan, Aubrey Mather, C. Aubrey Smith, Ian Hunter, Buster Keaton, Cecil Kellaway, Wendy Barrie, Eric Blore, Walter Kingsford, Una O'Connor, Nigel Bruce, Roland Young, Robert Cummings, Reginald Gardiner, Arthur Treacher, Edmund Gwenn, Dame Mae Whitty, Doris Lloyd, Halliwell Hobbes, Montague Love, Patric Knowles, Richard Haden, Elsa Lanchester, Robert Coote, Gladys Cooper, Clyde Cook, Gene Lockhart, Reginald Owen, Edward Everett Horton, Donald Crisp and many others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Crystal Ball" with Paulette Goddard, Ray Milland and William Bendix

(United Artists, January 22; time, 81 min.)

Although this comedy has nothing in it to get excited about, most audiences will find it a diverting entertainment. The action centers around a stranded beauty contest winner, who, posing as a fortune teller, seeks to romance with a young attorney, despite the opposition of a young and wealthy widow. The action moves along at a steady pace, and some of the farcical situations provoke considerable laughter. The dialogue is, on occasion, witty. The story itself is far-fetched, slightly silly in spots, and lacking in human appeal, for not one of the characters does anything to awaken sympathy. The production values are good, and the performances engaging:—

Stranded in New York, Paulette Goddard, a beauty contest winner, is befriended by Gladys George, a crystal-gazer, who gets her a job enticing customers to Cecil Kellaway's shooting gallery. Gladys is visited by Ray Milland, an attorney, and Virginia Field, a wealthy widow, who hoped to marry Milland. Gladys' advice helps Virginia to locate a valuable ring. Virginia's maid, secretly in cahoots with Gladys, had hidden the ring, hoping to share in the reward. Virginia invites Gladys to appear at a charity ball, but the conniving seeress suffers an accident, and drafts Paulette to impersonate her. Gladys instructs Paulette to give Milland a "spirit" message to the effect that there was oil on a certain plot of land. Actually, Gladys knew that the government intended to buy the land for a defense plant, and if Milland bought it for Virginia, she expected to share in the profits. After giving Milland the "message," Paulette prophesies that he will meet a red-headed beauty on the following day. Milland scoffs at this. Through a clever scheme Paulette makes his acquaintance on the following day, and it is not until he takes her motoring that he notices her red hair, and remembers the crystal-gazer's words. They fall in love. When government agents accuse him of buying the land for profiteering purposes, Milland seeks to locate Gladys, hoping that an admission of her "tip" would clear him. Realizing that Milland's reputation was at stake, Paulette pleads with Gladys to admit her scheme. She refuses, and locks Paulette in a closet, where Virginia finds her. Learning of Paulette's deception, and wishing to rid herself of a rival, Virginia advises Paulette to leave town lest Milland be branded an embezzler. Paulette decides to take her advice, but first clears Milland's name with the government. As she prepares to leave town, Milland appears and forgives her.

Virginia Van Upp wrote the screen play, Richard Blumenthal produced it, and Elliot Nugent directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Truck Busters" with Richard Travis and Ruth Ford

(Warner Bros., February 6; time, 57 min.)

The action fans in small-town and neighborhood theatres should find this melodrama to their taste. There is nothing original about the story, and it unfolds in a manner the spectator expects; but it does not become boring because of the fast action and exciting situations. The story revolves around the machinations of a crooked trucking combine, and their efforts to force the independent truckers out of business. It is not a cheerful entertainment, and the comedy relief is negligible. The plight of the combine's victims is sympathy awakening. The closing scenes, where the gangsters are trapped, are fairly exciting:—

Because of the government order forbidding the purchase of new trucks, William Davidson, unscrupulous trucking magnate, concocts a plan to freeze the independent truckers out of business. In order to do this, Davidson hires Don Costello, a hi-jacker, and his henchmen. Richard Travis, a

young trucker and president of the independent's association, decides to put up a fight. When Travis and Charles Lang, his younger brother, stop at a roadside cafe, two of Costello's gangsters tamper with the brakes of Travis' truck. The brothers resume their trip, only to have the truck get out of hand and plunge over an embankment. Travis leaps to safety, but Lang is killed. With Virginia Christine, his sweetheart, Travis breaks the news to Ruth Ford, Lang's widow. Determined to avenge his brother's death, Travis refuses to cooperate with the district attorney. Travis was convinced that Rex Williams, Costello's chief lieutenant, was responsible for the crime. To double-cross Williams, Costello sees to it that Travis learns of the killer's hideout. When Travis reaches the hideout, Costello and his henchmen shoot Williams and knock Travis unconscious. The police find Travis with the gun in his hand, and arrest him for the murder of Williams. Pleading innocence, Travis persuades the district attorney to give out the news that Williams is not dead, and that he is making a confession in the hospital. Costello and his men are caught when they enter the hospital and shoot the dead body.

Robert E. Kent and Raymond L. Schrock wrote the screen play, and B. Reaves Eason directed it.

Not for children.

"Tarzan Triumphs" with Johnny Weissmuller and Francis Gifford

(RKO, March 12; time, 78 min.)

A typical "Tarzan" program jungle melodrama, with a timely angle; it should direct an appeal to the followers of the series, as well as to the juvenile trade. This time "Tarzan's" ire is aroused by the Nazis, who make the mistake of invading his peaceful jungle empire. As in the other pictures, there is the usual "Tarzan" heroics and acrobatics, and the comedy is furnished by Cheta, the chimpanzee. Francis Gifford is the new heroine in place of Maureen O'Sullivan, but the story indicates that Miss O'Sullivan's absence is temporary. Johnny Weissmuller and young John Sheffield play their usual roles:—

Following a report by a German explorer on the mineral riches of Palandrya, a remote Arabic colony in the heart of the African jungle, Nazi paratroopers are dispatched to take over the area, enslave the inhabitants, and prepare a landing field for further activities. Schmidt (Rex Williams), radio-man of the paratroopers, becomes separated from his companions, and is found by Tarzan (Johnny Weissmuller), who gives him shelter. Schmidt masquerades as an English traveler. Meanwhile Zandra (Francis Gifford), daughter of Palandrya's chief, flees the village when the Nazis massacre and enslave the inhabitants. She makes good her escape with the aid of Tarzan, who had been notified of her predicament by Boy (John Sheffield), his son. During Tarzan's absence, Cheta, the chimpanzee, playfully steals the aerial from Schmidt's radio. Schmidt attempts to kill Cheta, but he is pushed to his death off a cliff by Cheta's indignant elephant friend. Zandra begs Tarzan to help her people, but he refuses to involve himself with the Nazis. Searching for the missing Schmidt and Zandra, a party of Nazi soldiers meet Boy and take him back to Palandrya. In an attempt to save Boy, Tarzan is captured, as is Zandra. The faithful Cheta brings a knife to Tarzan, who frees himself and his companions. Aroused, Tarzan slays his guard, disarms the sentries, and gives their weapons to the Palandryan warriors. With Tarzan's aid, the Palandryan's wipe out the invaders and save their village.

Roy Chanslor and Carroll Young wrote the screen play, Sol Lesser produced it, and William Thiele directed it. The cast includes Sig Ruman, Stanley Ridges, Philip Van Zandt, Pedro De Cordoba and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Our big job in the field is to convince our 80,000,000 weekly patrons that single features constitute a war measure, and that despite the fact that a feature is being deleted, extra entertainment is in store for them in the excellent government short subjects, and non-war shorts produced by our own studios, which hitherto have been crowded off screens to a great extent because of lengthy programs.

"The time for talking is past. We are faced with the need for immediate action. . . . Otherwise we are likely to be caught without product and without plans when the summer of 1943 rolls around to find us still talking.

"Studios must gear themselves—now—for single feature programs. Distributors must change their plans and policies, and exhibitors will have the tremendous vital job of selling the movie-going public. It's a job that must be done—and done quickly—and it must be done by us—not by outside governmental representatives entirely unfamiliar with our particular problems."

These are very fine words, but it is apparent that Harry Arthur is not practicing that which he is preaching. Are we to believe that the St. Louis exhibitors' resolution to adopt a single-feature policy indicates his personal stand, or are we to believe that the New Year's Eve programs of the four theatres under his direction are indicative of his personal stand? Are we to believe that the Fanchon and Marco theatres are among those "anxious to take advantage of a situation," and that with them the economic question takes preference over the patriotic question? Are we to believe that, if playing double-feature programs hinder the nation's war efforts, sextuple features virtually amount to sabotage? Are we to believe that the Fanchon and Marco circuit sorely lacks showmanship; that they are not capable of selling their patrons on the single-feature program for the duration? How does this circuit expect to convince its patrons that running single features constitutes a war measure when it treats them to no less than six features in one evening for the same admission price? With such a policy, Fanchon and Marco may find it difficult to convince its patrons that they are getting their money's worth with double features, let alone single features. Are we to believe that running six features on one bill is an example of "immediate action" toward the elimination of double features? Are we to believe that Fanchon and Marco is concerned about being caught without product when the summer of 1943 rolls around?"

And what about the playing of Government shorts? If you will examine the programs of each of the four theatres, you will note that not one of them lists a Government short. There can be no doubt but that the lengthy programs crowded them off the screen—a condition Mr. Arthur deplores in his letter.

At a time when we in the industry must be thankful for every feature we now have "in the can," the action of the Fanchon and Marco theatres, as well as any other theatres that exhibited more than two features on New Year's Eve, is an inexcusable orgy of product dissipation, one that is contrary to the zealous efforts of the industry to combat the conditions war imposes on it.

To repeat Jay Emanuel's words, "Shame on those who perpetrated this outrage."

WE ARE ESSENTIAL BECAUSE OF MORALE AND NOT BECAUSE OF COLLECTIONS

The following is part of a release, sent out on January 14, by Mr. Abram F. Myers, Chief Counsel of Allied States Association:

"In the early stages of the war we did not lack for persons who gave lip service to the proposition that 'movies are essential.' Leaders in the industry were quick to claim it; spokesmen for the Government readily conceded it. They did not have reference to the additional services which the

theatres were capable of rendering, but to the motion picture business as it was then known—the basic entertainment of the American people. In the discussions it was recognized that amid the distractions and privations of war there must occasionally be some escape from reality. We were told of the efforts made to keep the theatres open in London for the effect on the morale of the people. Appropriate expressions were made by high officials of the Federal Government and the States as to the value of motion picture entertainment to both the armed forces and the civilian population. No one voiced a contrary view; the issue appeared to be settled.

"In recent months there has been a recession from this early point of view that is most disturbing to those who have the interests of the motion picture business at heart.

"This startling change in attitude towards the motion picture business has resulted not so much from any noticeable change in the utterances of Government officials as from the unguarded outpourings of persons in the industry who ought to know better. In carrying on the praiseworthy fund-raising and bond-selling activities in which the industry is engaged, they have not been content to treat these as the voluntary contributions to the common welfare of an otherwise essential industry, but have insisted that these activities constitute the only justification for keeping the theatres open. Thus we were shocked to read a few days ago that an exhibitor prominent in the War Activities Committee, speaking for the United Nations Drive, had declared that the theatres must perform essential functions connected with the war if they hoped to remain open. From the context the implication was that unless the theatres collected money from their patrons for this particular cause, they would cease to be essential and would be closed.

"The theatres have done a splendid job in running the Victory and other informational shorts. The theatre associations are setting up a clearing service in Allied territories to enable the theatres to do an even better job. The obligation to run these pictures was freely assumed; it is being fully discharged. The early manifestations of a disposition on the part of some zealots towards coercion was repudiated by the Government representatives. Yet one still hears overheated exhibitors telling their brethren in open meetings that unless they show all reels of a patriotic nature—indeed, unless they submit to policing by the distributors to see that they run such reels—they will be branded as unessential and put out of business.

"No issue is raised as to the relative value of the various campaigns and drives that have been and are being staged by the industry. This discussion proceeds upon the premise that they are all meritorious. The great majority of exhibitors have accepted them as such and they have been successfully conducted. We are proud that practically one-half of the total amount raised for United Service Organizations was raised by the independent theatres. Our objection is that in emphasizing the need for good work in aid of the war effort, these zealots have broken down the basic principle on which we started off, and which Allied has sought to maintain, that movies are essential to the health and morale of a war-torn world and that the extra services performed by the theatres are a gratuitous contribution to the common cause and not an excuse for their existence.

"In *Collier's Weekly* last week was a story of a young woman whose husband had just gone off on a dangerous mission on a submarine chaser. She is trying to think how to occupy her time so that she will not worry too much. The author has the obvious answer which he puts into her mouth: 'I'll . . . I'll . . . go to the movies . . . the evenings aren't so long if you go to the movies.' Multiply that case by several million and you will begin to grasp how great a contribution the movies are making to endurance on the home front. This makes out a strong case on which the industry should stand. The next WAC orator who opens his mouth to the effect that the theatres must do this or that to justify their continued operation should be pulled from the platform with the traditional hook."

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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Let Us Consider the Hard-hit Exhibitor

Most recent of the rulings to plague the already harassed exhibitor, is the action taken by Rhode Island's Governor J. Howard McGrath, who, under emergency powers granted to him by the state legislature, has ordered theatres and other places of public amusement to curtail their operations to six-sevenths of what they were during the week of January 3. The order, which will go into effect on January 28, applies to all amusement establishments, regardless of whether they are heated by oil or by coal. Violation of the ruling provides for a fine of five hundred dollars and/or ninety days imprisonment.

Governor McGrath originally proposed that all such buildings operate on a five-days-a-week basis, but, following public hearings in which those affected vigorously opposed the ruling, the one-seventh cut in operating time was agreed upon, with amusement places left to work out their own shortened schedules.

Taking their cue from Rhode Island, other states soon followed suit.

In Connecticut, Governor Baldwin, in a radio appeal for the conservation of fuel, proposed that all places of amusement close their doors on Sundays and Mondays. The exhibitor organizations in Connecticut sharply protested against this proposal and, at this writing, the state fuel administrator announced that if theatres close their doors for one full day, it will be deemed sufficient compliance with the Governor's appeal. The exhibitors, however, favor the Rhode Island plan of curtailing operations by shorter hours each day, spread through the entire week.

In Massachusetts, the state legislature is considering a bill that would limit the operation of oil-heated theatres to four days a week for the duration. State officials have already warned theatres that they will not be allowed more than ten thousand gallons of oil a month.

That more states will be heard from before long, seems a foregone conclusion.

This paper does not question the urgency of the fuel situation in the seventeen eastern states rationed by the Office of Price Administration, nor does it question the attempts of the various state governments to solve this difficult problem. To say that the rulings were aimed at amusement centers would be asinine, since schools, as well as public buildings, are included in the order. Moreover, this paper is of the opinion that a one-seventh cut in operating time, spread over a period of one week, will not have a telling effect on the box-offices of the theatres affected, provided the exhibitors agree to a non-competitive operating schedule, such as was wisely adopted by the theatre managers in Providence.

But what about the future?

Petroleum Administrator Harold S. Ickes is credited with saying that conditions "will get worse before they get better," because of the demands made by accelerated military activities. Moreover, officials in Washington have indicated that if and when it becomes necessary to issue a "priority list" by which oil distributors are to judge the order of preference in which consumers are to be serviced, theatres will of necessity be placed at the bottom of such a list. The fact that the greater percentage of theatres have converted their heating plants to burn coal means very little; in that type of fuel there exists a shortage, because of the recent miners' strike and the difficulties had with transportation. In all probability, the coal distributors, too, will be handed a "priority list."

Despite the continued imposition of far-reaching restrictions by the federal, state, and local governments, the nation's exhibitors, with the exception of a few, have managed to keep their theatres in operation, and helped to maintain the morale that is so essential to a people at war. The task of the exhibitor has not been easy; loss of manpower with which to operate his theatre; decreased patronage because of shifting populations and gas rationing; the two hundred dollar limit allowed for repairs and alterations to his theatre within one year; the reduction of prints in circulation because of film conservation—all these, and many more, is what the exhibitor has had to overcome or contend with.

But there is a limit to the hardships the exhibitors can endure, despite their willingness to cooperate and make sacrifices. In time we are going to find that more and more theatres will be compelled to close their doors. This is a condition the industry, as well as the government, can ill afford. It is a condition that requires our immediate attention.

The time has come when we in the motion picture industry must discard our cloak of hesitancy and call upon the government for a clarification of the extent our business is to be maintained in accordance with war-time exigencies. In other words, are we, or are we not, "essential"? Up to this point, the term "essential," as applied to the industry, has had not only an unofficial status, but a fluctuating value.

The motion picture industry has earned its right to know where it stands. Even before Pearl Harbor, when the nation first geared itself to a policy of national defense, the industry was quick to recognize its importance to the morale of the people, and it immediately adapted itself to such a program. Since then, the part it has played in the war effort is a matter of public record, one every industryite might well be

(Continued on last page)

"The Crime Smasher" with Frank Graham, Richard Cromwell and Gale Storm

(Monogram, January 29; time, 61 min.)

Mildly entertaining program fare. Murders, kidnapping, and gang murders form the basis of this comedy-drama, which places more emphasis on the comedy. The film marks the screen debut of Frank Graham, who, for a number of years, has been featured in weekly radio playlets as "Cosmo Jones," an eccentric amateur detective, which is the role he portrays in the picture; his popularity with radio fans should be of considerable help at the box-office. The story itself, though thin and hackneyed, has a fair share of excitement and thrills. The comedy is furnished by Edgar Kennedy, who, with his usual impatient antics, is considerably annoyed with Graham's amateur sleuthing. Manton Moreland, as Graham's colored aid, adds to the comedy. The picture should find its best reception in small-town and neighborhood theatres:—

Plagued by a crime wave that had been sweeping the city, the police commissioner demands of Police Chief Edgar Kennedy that he put a stop to it. Frank Graham, a correspondence-school detective, happens on the scene when a gangster is killed by a rival gang; he offers his services to the police, much to the annoyance of Kennedy. Gwen Kenyon, a socialite, is unaware of the fact that the man she loves is secretly a gangster, and that his gang plans to kidnap her and hold her for ransom. Graham and Sergeant Richard Cromwell come upon the gangsters just as they attempt to kidnap Gwen in front of a night club. They prevent the kidnapping, but a bystander is killed in the ensuing gun battle. Blamed by Kennedy for the shooting, Cromwell is demoted. With the help of Manton Moreland, a colored porter, Graham sets out on the trail of the gangsters. Gale Storm, Cromwell's fiancée, aids Graham in his search. Gwen is finally kidnapped, and Graham deduces that she was held by one of the rival gangs. He arranges with Herbert Rawlinson, Gwen's father, to falsely publicize the news that he was in contact with the kidnapers. As a result, the gangs accuse each other of double-crossing, and one is wiped out by the other. The remaining mobsters contact Rawlinson, but, through devious methods employed by Graham, all are captured and Gwen is set free. Cromwell is reinstated, and Graham is commended by the police commissioner.

Michael Simmons wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and James Tinling directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Hi, Buddy" with Dick Foran, Robert Paige and Harriet Hilliard

(Universal, February 26; time, 73 min.)

While the story behind this run-of-the-mill Universal musical will not overtax one's intelligence, the picture is a fair entertainment, and it should serve its purpose as a supporting feature in situations where previous such films have proved acceptable. Studio rehearsals, army camp shows, and a boys' club serve as the background for the musical numbers, which are tuneful and plentiful. The story has some human interest, which is awakened by the efforts of a radio singer to help an East Side boys' club out of its financial difficulties. The romantic interest is mild:—

Recognizing the singing talent of Robert Paige, Gus Schilling, a theatrical agent, signs him to a contract, and gets him a job singing on the radio as the partner of Harriet Hilliard. Even though Paige wants to enlist in the Army, he takes the job because the money will enable him to finance the Hi, Buddy Club for young boys on New York's east side. Dick Foran, a buck private, and Marjorie Lord had helped Paige conduct the club's affairs. Paige becomes a sensation, and goes on a tour to broadcast from various army camps. He arranges with Schilling to turn a portion of his salary over to the club. But Schilling pockets the money

instead, and sees to it that Marjorie's letters do not reach Paige. Harriet, who wanted Paige for herself, manages to keep his letters from reaching Marjorie. Home on furlough, Foran learns that the club will have to give up its summer camp, and that Paige had failed to keep his promise. He returns to camp and secures permission from his commanding officer to put on a benefit show for the club. While Foran rehearses his pals, Paige arrives at the camp to do a broadcast. Foran refuses to talk to him. Determined to find out what the trouble is, Paige drives to New York where Marjorie, too, ignores him. When Tommy Cook, the club's president, informs him of the trouble, Paige goes after Schilling. He drags him down to the club just as the benefit begins and, with the aid of Wade Boteler, the policeman on the beat, compels Schilling to spend plenty of money. Paige hurries to the nearest recruiting station and enlists.

Warren Wilson wrote the screen play, Paul Malvern produced it, and Harold Young directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"It Comes Up Love" with Gloria Jean and Donald O'Connor

(Universal, no release date set; time, 65 min.)

This is a pleasant program entertainment, the sort that should please the young folks, as well as family audiences. It is an agreeable mixture of comedy, music, and adolescent love, in which Gloria Jean, as a spectacled miss, prim and old-fashioned, is transformed into a chic young lady, who straightens out the romantic difficulties of her elders, as well as her own. The performances of the cast is engaging, but it is Donald O'Connor who gives the film its flavor. He is vastly amusing as a teen-age "man-about-town," and by his performance he shows once again that he is destined to become a top star. A few classical and "swing" songs are sung by Gloria in her usual charming voice:—

Louise Allbritton, an interior decorator in the employ of Ian Hunter, a widowed architect, resents Frieda Inescort, a wealthy widow, who used the remodeling of her home as a means of pursuing Hunter. When Hunter is faced with the problem of caring for Gloria Jean and Mary Lou Harrington, his daughters, Frieda is quick to grasp the opportunity to take charge of his household. Both girls had been raised in an old-fashioned manner by their grandmother, with whom they had been living. Frieda arranges for Raymond Roe, her seventeen-year-old son, to give a party for the girls. As a counter measure, Louise introduces Gloria to Donald O'Connor, her nephew. Impressed with his "worldly manner," Gloria invites him to the party. When Donald does not return Gloria's adulation, Louise bribes him to take her to a night club. There Donald introduces Gloria to "jitter-bugging," and induces her to sing a "swing" song with the orchestra. Louise takes Gloria to a beauty salon and, buying her new clothes, transforms her into an attractive girl. Donald falls in love with her. Frieda frightens Hunter into thinking that Gloria is leading a "wicked" life, and he forbids her to see Donald. Frieda then high-handedly tricks Hunter by announcing her engagement to him. Angry with Hunter for not asserting himself, Louise decides to take matters into her own hands. She takes the youngsters to luncheon at the Crane Club where she arranges for Gloria and Donald to remain at the club, and for Mary to return home with her, and to inform Frieda and Hunter that the two youngsters were on their way to Greenwich to get married. After breaking the news, Mary quietly tells Hunter the truth. Mumbling an excuse to Frieda, Hunter accompanies Louise and Mary to the club where he gives Gloria and Donald his blessing, and at the same time reveals his love for Louise.

Dorothy Bennett and Charles Kenyon wrote the screen play, Ken Goldsmith produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

RECOMMENDATIONS THAT ARE OF INTEREST TO THE EXHIBITOR

In a speech before the Society of Motion Picture Engineers in New York, on January 21, Mr. Jay Emanuel, theatre operator and publisher of *The Exhibitor*, had this to say in part:

"One possibility for getting the most out of existing equipment, would be the establishing in each of the 29 film distribution territories throughout the United States, of a representative committee composed of:—

"One representative from each recognized supply store.

"An equal number of representatives of major circuits.

"An equal number of representatives of independent theatres.

"And an equal number of representatives of I.A.T.S.E. locals.

"If there were two supply stores then the committee would number 2, 2, 2, plus 2, or a total of 8. If there were five supply stores such as here in the New York City area, then the committee would number 5, 5, 5, plus 5, or a total of 20.

"I feel that there is no individual or company in any one territory with the knowledge of the equipment, spare parts, and warehoused hoarding, existing in that territory, than the local supply dealers have. It is for this reason that they, bolstered by the backing of representative members of all other local groups, must head any conservation or local pooling of resources committee.

"At other times the supply dealer was the fountain head for all equipment, parts, and supplies. When the national emergency arrived it is pretty well established that he had been pretty far ahead of us in premeditating shortages and was more heavily stocked than he would have been normally. It was his longheadedness that kept many theatres from going dark before the end of the first year of war. His supplies were not endless, however, and grateful as we must be to him, we must now realize that we are approaching the 'bottom of the bucket.' He has done his part and we can count on him, within the bounds of his remaining material, to continue; but he can't carry the whole load any longer.

"On the other hand, while Washington has issued many fine statements regarding the essential nature of the motion picture industry and the grand job it is doing for public morale and the war effort, anyone who thinks we need only apply for our essential equipment and some busy war plant will stop its work and convert to our manufacture, is an optimistic babe indeed. Committees after committees have gone to Washington and individuals have spent months there on what they thought to be productive lobbying; but right to this minute there has never been a single priority issued that would permit manufacturing that would replace or repair, theatre equipment. While machines of war are needed by our country, the realistic view is, to forget Washington as a source, and to depend completely on our own existing industry resources.

"Therefore it should be the objective of each local industry committee to attempt to put together a confidential inventory of all supplies, spare parts, and spare equipment existing in their territory; and by a program of exhibitor meetings held in every key city throughout their territory to educate all owners and circuit operators into the advantage of pooling their combined resources for the ultimate good of all,—and so that all may be kept open for the longest possible period.

"I know of one instance where an independent circuit started early in the Defense Program to buy huge quantities of spare parts, carbons, and other supplies, and equipment so that today it possesses a greater stock than any local supply dealer. When the local dealers put into force the practice of requiring a broken or used item to be returned before filling an order for a new one, this circuit still didn't

draw on its 'backlog' but started returning used items, the same as everyone else. This is hoarding of the worse order and such a committee could bring the pressure of local opinion, and the regard of local exchange men who depend on open theatres for their livelihood, to bear on this circuit, to the extent of placing at least some of its stock at the disposal of others who need it.

"Operators such as myself who possess 'floating spares' which are used only a maximum of 10% in any one year, would be glad to pool them if we were certain that through the pool we could draw on other spares when needed, and in the event that ours was in use by some contemporary.

"It is not my thought that the pool would place good new equipment permanently in the booth of some shooting gallery that never had good equipment before. All stocks should be built up for emergency lending only—and the recipient would be given some definite period of time to have his old equipment repaired and to exercise his own resourcefulness before the loaned equipment would be withdrawn. The objectives would be, not to help weak sisters—but to keep legitimate theatres open.

"For the completely different purpose of cooperating in the various campaigns dealing with the Nation's war effort, there has already been established in each territory local committees of the National War Activities Committee of the Motion Picture Industry. It is not impossible to suppose that some arrangement could be made with this existing body to incorporate these local equipment conservation and pooling committees under their supervision, and to coordinate them into a national endeavor. It may be possible that in Salt Lake or some similar smaller distribution territory, there may be no backlog of supplies or spare parts whatsoever; and through national coordination stocks could be loaned to it from neighboring committees. This would also cover the old or unusual piece of equipment that is not as widely used in the nation's theatres as a Super Simplex Head or a Strong Lamp."

Discussing conservation by the rationing of show hours, Mr. Emanuel said:

"From our communications which cross my desk, I note considerable feeling for either total closing of all theatres by agreement one day each week (usually Monday); or for a staggered closing plan that would give competing theatres an equal share of 'competition free' mid-week days. Under the latter plan Theatre A would close on Monday and Wednesday, and Theatre B would close on Tuesday and Thursday; and the following week the theatres would reverse the procedure.

"There is no question in my mind that both of these plans have some merit and that, if essential supplies of carbon, personnel, film, fuel oil, etc., become more scarce, the government may force some such rationing plan on the nation's theatres. For this reason it may be better to consider voluntary self rationing rather than forced.

"The savings are obvious. The normal seven day operated theatre can save its use of supplies and the normal wear and tear on its irreplaceable equipment by 52 days each year if it converts to six day operation. Or better still that theatre can extend its exhaustion or closing date, whenever it may be, by nearly two months.

"On the monetary side, the saving in seventh day overhead added to the better day's receipts on both sides of the closed day, or, in the event of a staggered agreement, added to the day operated without competition, will probably bring the six day total pretty close to the normal seven day total.

"Curtailed matinees have already been adapted in many situations and compose the first cut in normal show hours. The more drastic 'closed day' policy is just in the discussion stage but it may be proved acceptable; and, without in any significant way affecting the public morale which is our charge during war time, may be the final conservation conclusion."

proud of. In addition to providing diversion and relaxation for the tired minds and heavy hearts of a people at war, the motion picture is second to none in the services it has performed for the nation through its intensified campaigns for the sale of war bonds and stamps; funds to support numerous war relief agencies; the collection of scrap metal and rubber; community chests drives; funds for the fight against infantile paralysis; the annual Red Cross drives; and many other worthy causes. As a medium for the dissemination of information for the enlightenment and instruction of the public, the motion picture has been of invaluable aid to the government.

Government leaders, both military and civilian, have lauded the industry's accomplishments in glowing terms. They unanimously agree that we are essential to the successful prosecution of the war, and that every possible assistance should be given to us to insure the continued operation of our theatres. But the treatment the industry has thus far received from these leaders has not been compatible with their statements.

This paper is not raising a hue and cry against the rulings imposed on the industry by the government. It fully realizes, and appreciates, that, for the most part, these rulings are the result of the constantly changing conditions of war, and that they are essential to the welfare of the nation as a whole. It does, however, raise a hue and cry against the bureaucratic system in Washington, which has kept the industry straddled on a fence, not knowing which way to jump.

As pointed out by the Washington correspondent of weekly *Variety* in a recent issue: "Observers wonder if the government (collectively) ever will make up its mind where the film industry fits into the overall war picture. Certainly as long as the general overlapping and duplication, indistinct jurisdiction, lack of firm direction, and political or personal jealousies continue—giving pain to almost every line of business—the motion picture producers and exhibitors will have to put up with such conditions as have meant continuous headaches for the past year. But the film industry must get set for even more unpleasantness, due chiefly to the basic inability of officials with lack of knowledge of industry problems to make up their minds, adopt policies, and map out programs."

"Until somebody here decides how 'essential' pictures are and in what way—if at all—both Hollywood and New York, in company with the Main Street exhibs, must reconcile themselves to the certainty of upsets, muddles, and progressive belt-tightening."

The motion picture industry cannot conduct its business on indecisiveness. We must know which road to take. Only then can we guide ourselves.

Accordingly, it is up to us to find out where we stand. Our first step should be the formulation of a war-time strategy board, made up of duly accredited leaders of ALL branches of the industry, to be recognized by Washington as representative of the industry as a whole. The first duty of such a board should be to seek a clarification of our status. It should present to the government a report of the inroads the numerous edicts have made on our business, and it should recommend the elimination of any inequities that exist, provided, of course, that such inequities are of a nature that are harmful to the business, but do not help the war effort. By no means should the board resort to lobbying to gain special favors. The fact that we have gone all-out for the war effort does not entitle us to special consideration; such efforts are a duty

and a privilege. The question of whether or not our industry should be given special consideration is for the government to determine, and not for us. The public would be quick to resent pressure-politics on our part, and we cannot afford to lose their good will.

But no matter what rating, if any, is granted to us, we cannot expect to operate on a business-as-usual basis. We should expect that conditions beyond the control of either the government or ourselves may cause the semi-closing of some of our theatres, and the complete shuttering of others. Therefore, the purpose of a war-time strategy board should not be limited to the extent of contact with Washington, but it should be given the powers to formulate and regulate sensible operational policies within the industry itself. It would, in effect, be a form of self regulation with a view toward maintaining, through industry cooperation, the status quo of the channels of production, distribution, and exhibition to the extent that the conditions of war will permit.

Of the many problems that will have to be considered, none is more urgent than that of the independent exhibitors, particularly in small towns. It is these exhibitors who have been most seriously affected by the war, and whose closing of theatres is steadily increasing. Chief among the reasons for their closing is the loss of patronage due to the exodus of townspeople migrating to war manufacturing centers, and due to gas rationing, which prevents rural patrons and customers from surrounding hamlets from reaching their theatres. The fuel oil situation has, in some cases, hastened these closings.

Both from a business and patriotic viewpoint, the industry must do everything within its power to keep these exhibitors in operation.

From the patriotic viewpoint it is our responsibility to see to it that, particularly in these times, no community is deprived of the entertainment and relaxation afforded by the motion picture. Moreover, our responsibility is increased by the fact that the small-town theatre has become a community center, through which the government, by means of short subjects, is educating the American public on issues of vital importance to the war effort. Hence, not to make an effort to prevent a theatre from closing is to hinder the war effort.

From a business point of view, the industry, which, through the years, has spent millions of dollars to make the American public movie-conscious, cannot afford to lose any outlets for its product. Although the industry's profits are now at its greatest height, and the loss of a small-town exhibitor's business is not going to hurt these profits to a point where it will cause the producers and distributors any great concern, a far-sighted view would be to take into consideration that, with the return of normal times and normal grosses, the business to be had from this same exhibitor will spell the difference between profit and loss. The protection that the industry will give him now is insurance for the future.

To the aforementioned strategy board would fall the task of working out a plan by which the exhibitor in dire straits, through no fault of his own, will be maintained. Such a plan would have to include, among other things, the adjustment of clearances and film rentals, even to the extent of free rentals, if necessary.

The small-town exhibitor is admittedly the backbone of our business. To ignore his plight, is to weaken our spinal column.

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THE EDDIE RICKENBACKER PICTURE

You have already read, I am sure, the announcement that Winfield Sheehan, formerly production head of Fox Film Corporation, will produce a picture based on the life of Eddie Rickenbacker. Mr. Rickenbacker consented to permit the portrayal of his life on the screen only after admirals, generals, many other friends and Secretary of War Stimson persuaded him to do so, and only after he was convinced that a picture of this kind will help build up morale among the people, not only of this nation but also of every other nation of the world, which will have an opportunity to realize the true meaning of democracy.

The life of Eddie Rickenbacker reads like a book. At the age of ten, he cut a marble monument for his departed father. Later on he became a handy boy at a garage and, at eighteen, he was recognized as one of the best mechanics in Columbus, Ohio.

Every evening he would read books to supply himself with the education that he had missed in schools.

Rickenbacker became an automobile racer of great renown. His mechanical genius had enabled him to get the utmost out of his cars' motors. So well he knew motors that he won the trophy at the Vanderbilt race.

In one of the races, he was hurt badly when his motor caught fire. But through the knowledge that he acquired in studying the behavior of motors, he was inspired with the ambition to develop the finest motor possible for the public good.

During the first world war, he became a chauffeur to General Pershing, in France. Soon he obtained a transfer to the aviation corps, and within three months he became the ace of aces of the Allies, downing twenty-six German planes. He never once found himself in a jam, either with his motors or with his guns, for he always inspected and tested them before taking off.

He had his share of hard luck now and then, but he never placed the blame on any one else.

When he returned to the United States, he was honored with the Congressional Medal. He was decorated also by almost every one of the Allies.

Soon he became interested in civil aviation and in a short time he was elected president of Eastern Air Lines, benefiting aviation in general and his own company in particular because of his thorough knowledge of their problems.

At Atlanta, he fell six thousand feet and was injured severely. His friends considered it a miracle that he had not been killed in that fall. But Eddie Rickenbacker's guardian angel spared his life to be an inspiration to the young flyers in the present war effort. He regained his health and, in a short time, he was as sound as ever.

When the present war broke out, he offered his services to the Government, and they were accepted.

Because Eddie Rickenbacker knows better than any other aviator the air routes, not only of the Pacific, but also of every other ocean and of every land, Secretary of War Stimson chose him for an important mission to the Solomon Islands. It was during his flight to those islands that his plane, having encountered stiff head winds, lost speed and consumed more gasoline than normally, and he was compelled to land in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, away from any island.

The details of the loss of Rickenbacker and of his men are known too well to everybody to need reiteration. For twenty-one days, during which time the nation and his family were held breathless, he and some of his men huddled in an inflated rubber boat without either food or water. It seems as if the Divine Power had sent him a sea gull, which gave him and his companions scant nourishment.

In the inflated boat in that sea expanse, Rickenbacker, with his Bible, had time to pray and to reflect. Faith and courage had never left him, becoming an inspiration to his companions. And again his faith became a reality—he was rescued, forty pounds lighter.

After the necessary rest, he did not return to the United States at once; he first went on to complete the mission that had been entrusted to him by the Secretary of War.

Eddie Rickenbacker has everything a mortal can ask for—a fine family, wealth, good health, exuberant spirit, and a determination to overcome whatever obstacles are in his way.

A picture portraying his fine qualities and heroic deeds should prove an inspiration to every one who will see it, no matter in what part of the world he may happen to live. Produced particularly at this time, it should do to the cause of the Allied Nations immense good, for it will show to the people of the world that lack of wealth in one's youth is no obstacle to those who have intelligence, tenacity, perseverance, and a determination to make good.

Winfield Sheehan, who will, as said, produce the picture, and who is a personal friend of Mr. Rickenbacker, is too well known to the motion picture industry and to the public to need an introduction. He has produced such box-office hits as "Cavalcade," "Sunrise" (Academy Award winners), "Seventh Heaven," "Sunny Side Up," "State Fair," "In Old Arizona," "The Man Who Came Back," "Bad Girl," "The Cockeyed World," "David Harum," "What Price Glory," and many others. His present ambition is to make the Rickenbacker picture the best of all. And this paper believes that he will, for he has so inspiring a subject!

HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes Mr. Sheehan great success.

"Air Force" with John Garfield, Harry Carey and John Ridgely

(Warner Bros., March 20; time, 124 min.)

A great picture, both as to production and entertainment values. This gripping war drama is a profoundly moving tribute to the American Air Force, and every person who sees it will leave the theatre inspired and impressed by the dramatic impact that it imparts. Produced with the assistance of the Army Air Corps, the film is a vivid and forceful fictional dramatization of the events that transpired during the first few trying weeks of the war, immediately following the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. The courage with which our armed forces fought against the Japanese onslaught, despite the lack of supplies, equipment, and reinforcements, is dramatically shown through the adventures of a Flying Fortress and its valorous crew. From the time the Fortress lands at bomb-riddled Hickam Field on the day of the attack, to the time it makes a crash landing on an Australian beach, the action is packed with thrilling battle scenes, the like of which surpasses anything yet shown on the screen. With the exception of a few newsreel shots, most of the battle scenes were done with miniature models, but they are amazingly realistic. Aside from its thrilling aspects, the story is replete with situations that arouse the emotions of sympathy. A touching scene is where Harry Carey, veteran crew engineer and proud father of a Lieutenant in the Air Corps, learns that his son had been killed in Manila. Equally effective is the hospital scene where John Ridgely, the crew's captain, wounded badly in an air battle, begs his men to keep the plane in the air, then dies. The performances of the cast are uniformly excellent, with that of Harry Carey's outstanding. George Tobias, as the port waist gunner from Brooklyn, contributes many hilarious moments. Others in the cast are John Garfield, as the surly aerial gunner, peeved at his failure to make the grade as pilot; Gig Young, as the copilot; M. W. Hauser, as the navigator; Ward Wood, as the radio operator; Ray Montgomery, as the turret gunner; and Arthur Kennedy, as the bombardier. Howard Hawks' skillful direction has succeeded in making the action realistic in the extreme. The photography is expert:—

The epic flight of the Fortress, named affectionately "Mary Ann" by its crew, begins with a routine flight from California to Hawaii on December 6. As the plane approaches Pearl Harbor on the following morning it is warned by radio of the Japanese attack, and warned not to land at Hickam Field. The plane makes an emergency landing at Maui, where it is attacked from ambush by fifth columnists. With no ammunition to defend itself, the plane takes off and flies to Hickam Field, making a hazardous landing. Because of the urgent need of planes with which to defend Manila, the "Mary Ann" is refueled immediately, and is ordered to proceed there by way of Wake Island. Fighting fog and storms, the plane reaches the beleaguered garrison on Wake Island, only to be ordered to leave at once, because of an impending Japanese attack. Upon reaching Clark Field, in Manila, the crew is informed that the field is being evacuated, and that they must proceed to Australia. While the crew services the plane, word is received that a Japanese invasion fleet had been sighted forty miles off the coast of Lingayen, and that a flight of fortresses could "give them a nice party." The crew of the "Mary Ann"—the only Fortress in Manila—requests and is given permission to attack the fleet. The plane sinks one cruiser and two transports, before an armada of Jap Zero planes attack her. Although damaged severely, the plane manages to reach the field. The commandant orders the field evacuated, and all damaged planes destroyed. The crew, however, pleads for a chance to repair the "Mary Ann." Taking parts from other wrecked ships, and working furiously, the crew manages to get the plane into the air just as the Japs storm the field. En route to Australia, they sight an enemy task force in the Coral Sea, and radio the information to the U. S. Bomber Command in Australia. In the ensuing battle the "Mary Ann" is damaged badly, but the crew manages to make a crash landing on an Australian beach, thus ending its career.

Dudley Nichols wrote the screen play, and Hal B. Wallis produced it. Jack L. Warner is the executive producer. The cast includes Stanley Ridges, Moroni Olsen, Edward S. Brophy, Richard Lane, Fay Emerson, Dorothy Peterson and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Squadron Leader X" with Eric Portman and Ann Dvorak

(RKO, April 16; time, 99 min.)

The British-made espionage melodrama is a fairly good entertainment; the story is interesting, the direction competent, and the performances good. Of the players, only Ann Dvorak is well known to American audiences. The story revolves around a Nazi spy, in England, who blackmails his friends and terrorizes them into aiding him to escape to Germany. He becomes the object of a hunt by Scotland Yard, which seeks to apprehend him, and of the Gestapo, which seeks to "liquidate" him. The action is considerably suspenseful:—

Disguised as an R.A.F. Squadron Leader, Eric Portman, a Nazi aviator, is sent to Belgium for the purpose of spreading hate for the British among the Belgians. By a queer turn of circumstances, Portman is befriended by Belgian patriots, and smuggled "back" to England with a group of downed British fliers. Portman, who before the war had lived in England, gets in touch with Ann Dvorak, a former sweetheart, now married to a British Army doctor, and blackmails her into aiding him to escape to Germany. As a hide-out, Portman selects the home of Martin Miller and Beatrice Varley, an elderly Swiss couple, who for years had been terrorized by the Gestapo, and who had become their unwilling agents. Through the fliers that had returned with Portman, Scotland Yard learns of his presence in the country. Peeved at Portman's failure to carry out his original mission, Henry Oscar, chief Gestapo agent in England, decides to "liquidate" him. Portman, however, manages to kill him first. With the arrest of Ann, Scotland Yard learns of Portman's hiding place. Portman escapes them, steals an automobile, and makes his way to a secret R.A.F. flying field where he succeeds in stealing a British Spitfire plane. Heading for Germany, Portman encounters a squadron of Messerschmitts over the English Channel. They unwittingly open fire on him, and he falls into the sea, a victim of his colleagues. Through the efforts of her husband, Ann is vindicated of complicity in the affair.

Wolfgang Wilhelm wrote the screen play from a story by Emeric Pressburger. Victor Hanbury produced it, and Lance Comfort directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Fighting Devil Dogs" with Lee Powell, Herman Brix and Montagu Love

(Republic, January 29; time, 69 min.)

Produced in 1938 as a serial, the episodes have been edited and put together to make a feature-length picture. The result is a fast-moving melodrama, in the ten-twenty-three manner, which will certainly satisfy the avid action fans, and thrill the youngsters. Discriminating audiences, however, may find it boring, since most of the situations are too ludicrous. The story revolves around Lee Powell and Herman Brix, Marine officers, who are assigned to track down a mad-man known only as "The Lightning." By the use of a new weapon, an artificial thunderbolt, the mad-man had terrorized the nation; a building, when struck by the mysterious weapon, turned into a crackling mass of death-dealing electricity. The action is full of hair-raising escapes, and nerve-wracking adventures, until the heroes succeed in making the mad-man a victim of his own diabolical plot.

Barry Shipman, Franklin Adreon, Ronald Davidson, and Sol Sher wrote the screen play. Robert Beche produced it, and William Witney and John English directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Two Weeks to Live" with Chester Lauck (Lum) and Norris Goff (Abner)

(RKO, February 19; time, 76 min.)

Mild program fare. It is no better and no worse than the other homespun comedies with "Lum and Abner," and its appeal will be directed mainly to their followers, particularly those who enjoy listening to their adventures on the radio. A few situations here and there are amusing, but for the most part the action is so silly that it becomes tiresome. Moreover, the action moves along at a listless pace, and its seventy-six minutes running time is much too long:—

Soon after Abner learns that he had inherited a railroad, he appoints Lum, his partner, as president. Before entraining for Chicago to see his dead uncle's lawyer, and to inspect the railroad, Abner induces his neighbors to invest ten thousand dollars to buy a right of way that would extend the railroad to the town. In Chicago, the two partners learn that the railroad is worthless and obsolete. As they leave the lawyer's office, Abner slips on the stairs, and the building manager rushes him to a doctor for an examination. Through a nurse's error, Abner's name is placed on the case card of a very sick man, and he is informed that he had but two weeks to live. Needing money to pay back their neighbors, Lum advertises for dangerous jobs to be undertaken by Abner, since he was about to die anyway. Among the jobs Abner accepts is painting a flag pole on the roof of a skyscraper; sleeping in a haunted house; airplane stunt man; and guiding a rocket to Mars. But something happens with all these jobs, and they bring him little money. Their troubles come to an end when they learn that the right of way they had purchased with their neighbors' money had been sold for twenty-five thousand dollars, leaving them, as well as their neighbors, a handsome profit.

Michael L. Simmons and Roswell Rogers wrote the screen play, Ben Hersh produced it, and Malcolm St. Clair directed it. The cast includes Franklyn Pangborn, Herbert Rawlinson, Kay Linaker, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"You Can't Beat the Law" with Edward Norris, Milburn Stone and Joan Woodbury

(Monogram, January 29; time, 64 min.)

A fair program prison melodrama; it holds one's interest, for the action is fast and at times exciting. It is a story of prison reform in which considerable human interest is aroused by the efforts of Milburn Stone, who, promoted from prison guard to warden, seeks to rehabilitate the prisoners through humanitarian policies. There is much excitement in the closing scenes where Edward Norris, a rehabilitated prisoner, who had become a prison guard to help the warden's program, thwarts a jail break. A mild romance has been worked into the plot:—

Edward Norris, an irresponsible playboy, is sent to prison when gangsters, who had forced him to drive their "get-away" car, testify falsely that he had been their leader; they sought to protect William Castello, their real leader. Embittered by the injustice of his conviction, Norris becomes an unruly prisoner. He is placed in the same cell with Jack La Rue, a hardened criminal, who plotted a jail break. Norris joins the plot. Displeased with the cruel methods of Kenneth Harlan, the warden, the Governor dismisses him and installs Milburn Stone, a kindly guard, as the new warden. Stone wins Norris over to his side by changing his cell and giving him an opportunity to work in the prison gardens. There, Norris meets Joan Woodbury, daughter of a prison guard. Aided by Castello on the outside, the gangsters who had testified against Norris attempt a break. All are wounded, and Castello is killed. One of the dying men confesses that Norris had been framed. Norris is freed. Attracted by the reforms that Stone had instituted, Norris

gives up his "playboy" life and becomes a guard. He falls in love with Joan, but believes that she is in love with Stone. La Rue manages to knock Norris unconscious and, using him as a shield, leads a number of prisoners in an attempted jail break. Norris, however, convinces the prisoners that the break cannot succeed, and they eventually return to their cells. After the riot is quelled, Stone informs Norris that he and Joan were never in love.

Al Beich wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Phil Rosen directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Flight for Freedom" with Rosalind Russell, Fred MacMurray and Herbert Marshall

(RKO, February 19; time, 101 min.)

Very good mass entertainment. Closely paralleling the career of Amelia Earhart, this aviation drama is an impressive tale of a woman who sacrifices love and life for her country. It moves at a steady pace, has deep human interest, good dialogue, and many suspenseful moments. All the characters are sympathetic, particularly Miss Russell; she gives warmth and understanding to the courageous character she portrays. The action takes place during the 1930's, and follows the career of Miss Russell from the time of her early flying days to the time she becomes the world's foremost aviatrix, called upon to secretly help the Government locate Japanese military fortifications on mandated islands. The closing scenes where Miss Russell deliberately crashes her plane into the sea is quite dramatic and holds one in suspense. The romantic interest is appealing. In addition to the popularity of the stars, word of mouth advertising may help to make this film one of the year's outstanding box-office pictures, for it is the type that will be enjoyed by both men and women:—

Heartbroken over her short-lived romance with Fred MacMurray, an ace flier, Rosalind Russell decides to challenge him in his own field. Within two years she becomes a good enough pilot to enter the air races with a plane designed by Herbert Marshall, her instructor. Her inexperience, however, causes her to lose the race. In Los Angeles she meets MacMurray, who unsuccessfully attempts to renew the romance. Goaded by his presence, Rosalind impulsively flies to New York and shatters his record. She becomes a famous aviatrix and, through her success, Marshall makes a fortune out of his plane design. When Marshall proposes, Rosalind agrees to marry him after she completes a solo flight around the world. Soon after she starts her flight, MacMurray notifies the Navy that he had accidentally discovered that the Japanese were fortifying their Mandated Islands in the Pacific. The Navy induces Rosalind to fake an accident and cancel her flight, then secretly arranges with her to make another flight, and to deliberately "lose" herself on a small island so as to provide a sound diplomatic excuse for the Navy to send out planes, which, under the guise of searching for her, would photograph the Jap installations. When Rosalind reached New Guinea, she learns that MacMurray had been assigned to guide her to the island. They renew their romance, and she agrees to marry him instead of Marshall. That night Rosalind discovers that the Japanese had learned of the scheme, and that they planned to rescue her the moment she landed on the island. Determined that the Navy should get its photographs, Rosalind takes off without informing MacMurray, flies to the vicinity of the islands and, after radioing an SOS, deliberately crashes into the sea. After Pearl Harbor, MacMurray, aided by the photographs made following Rosalind's sacrifice, successfully bombs the Japanese fortifications.

Oliver H. P. Garrett and S. K. Lauren wrote the screen play, David Hempstead produced it, and Lothar Mendes directed it. The cast includes Walter Kingsford, Edward Ciannelli, Damian O'Flynn, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

OF HIGH FILM RENTALS AND OIL CONSERVATION

The following is a release, sent out on January 25 by Abram F. Myers, chief counsel of Allied States Association:

"FILM RENTALS SOARING AGAIN

"Before we were ankle deep in the new year—the most critical in the world's history—the producer-distributors showed their contempt for the efforts of the government to control inflation and hold down prices by announcing staggering terms for forthcoming releases. The current conversation of the film salesman is a babble of '50 per cent,' '40 per cent,' 'sliding scale,' 'new intermediate brackets,' 'split figure,' 'conversion' and other devices all adding up to one thing, so far as the exhibitors are concerned, i.e., higher film rentals.

"We well remember the whoop that went up when the first demand was made for 50% of the gross receipts. Many exhibitors had the courage to stand out against it. But too many felt the itch for a little quick money and allowed the precedent to be established. It is doubtful if the independent exhibitors ever made a substantial profit playing on high percentage, even on the most outstanding productions. Not one of the pictures now being offered at 50% or 40% approximates in production cost, star attraction, novelty, or, to sum up, exhibition value, the pictures for which such terms were first demanded. Now these terms are asked for pictures that are only slightly above run of mine. These terms are becoming common-place and the distributors are looking to new horizons.

"DANGER AHEAD

"There is a question as to how far an indulgent Administration will permit this particular group of manufacturers and distributors to run hog wild while it places hobbles on others. But even though their ceiling continues to be the sky, so far as the Government is concerned, other economic forces are at work which should make the movie magnates pause and consider.

"For many years the words 'cost' and 'price' have ceased to have any meaning in the movie business. Production costs, due mainly to exorbitant salaries and bonuses, have steadily mounted until they have reached fantastic heights. The process was simple: as the costs went up, film rentals were raised and the burden was shunted first upon the exhibitors and then, to a considerable extent, upon the public. Because of mass attendance, admissions were kept within bounds (at least by the subsequent runs) and motion pictures continued to be comparatively, a low price entertainment.

"Now, however, a new factor has been introduced which leaves no loophole for this most favored industry to slip through. The American people are just beginning to feel the impact of the heaviest taxes in our industry. Tax legislation already on the books is designed to raise \$35,000,000,000 of revenue during the next fiscal year. The Government plans to spend \$109,000,000,000 during that period. The President wants \$51,000,000,000 of this amount raised without borrowing. That means that Congress, if it carries out the President's wish, will have to impose still further taxes to the tune of \$16,000,000,000. There is also considerable talk of forced savings; i.e., a requirement that a certain part of everyone's income be invested in Government bonds.

"Waging war on the scale on which we are now engaged calls for all of the income of all individuals above living expenses. Congress may not go as far as the President wishes (there is talk of \$10,000,000,000 more taxes and the rest—\$6,000,000,000—in compulsory savings). But in either case, the spending power of the people is going to be drastically reduced. There will be room for a moderate amount of recreation, but price is going to become an increasingly important factor. The Government can exempt motion pictures from the price regulations but it cannot protect the producer-distributors against the effects of reduced spending power. It cannot order the people to continue to spend the same or increased amounts at the theatre box-offices out of their reduced spending money. This new factor must be dealt with realistically and in the light of experience.

"HOLLYWOOD MUST SCALE DOWN

"There is only one way in which this menacing situation can be met: The salaries of the executives and the stars must be reduced; production costs must come down; the waste and extravagance that are synonymous with Hollywood must cease. These savings must be reflected in the film rentals demanded of the exhibitors. The exhibitors must have latitude in meeting the needs of their patrons for entertainment at a price they can afford to pay. Only in this way can the industry adjust itself to changing conditions without serious dislocations. Now is the time to cushion the shock.

"The Government has raised the storm signals, but the movie executives, enjoying unprecedented prosperity, have assumed that these were for the other fellows. After all, Uncle Sam did not say 'positively' and regulations from which the producers are not exempted are soon whittled away. The limitation on the costs of sets was given an interpretation which, apparently, robbed it of all its terrors. The limitation on salaries has been several times modified by interpretations and these, apparently, are only the beginning. The Government's brakes simply do not hold as far as the movies are concerned. But this time the producer-distributors will have to act and act promptly, otherwise they may expose the industry to a shock from which it will take years to recover.

"A thoroughgoing revision of the salary and bonus racket, a genuine insistence upon rigid economy and efficiency in the studios, plus a voluntary undertaking not to allow profits to rise above the levels prevailing in other essential industries engaged in actual war work, would insure that movies will continue uninterrupted as the basic entertainment of the American people and would increase the confidence and respect of the people themselves.

"FUEL OIL AND THE THEATRES

"In the publicity about the oil shortage there are frequent references to the theatres, always to the effect that they are 'unessential' and may be cut off to insure an adequate supply for homes and other essential uses. Of course, the theatres were warned to convert and Allied spread the warning. But for many, especially the independents, that was impossible. They must use oil or close. The question is: How much oil would be saved if the theatres were put out of business?

"Those who assume that the amount of oil consumed by the theatres would be saved for other uses are losing sight of the fact that in each movie audience there are persons who have turned down the furnace before leaving for the theatre thereby saving, in the aggregate, vastly more fuel than the theatre consumes.

"Not only do families leaving for the theatre turn down the heat, but they also turn off the lights, thereby reducing the consumption of fuel at the power house.

"It would seem that public officials, if they want to conserve fuel, should urge the people to congregate in places of amusement and absorb comfort from a central plant instead of operating their furnaces 24 hours a day.

"It might be a good idea for exhibitors by trailer (if obtainable), or by announcement in the theatre, to urge patrons to be sure to turn down their furnaces before coming to the movies. This probably is unnecessary, as everyone is fuel-conscious these days, but it would at least call attention to the saving that is effected by keeping the theatres open.

"The theatres which were unable to convert are mainly the neighborhood and small town theatres. Fortunately these are the theatres that cater to and serve the family trade. This type of audience is more likely to represent a substantial saving of fuel by the banking of home fires than any other. Certainly much more than the transient downtown audiences.

"Also it is this class of audience that the Government should be most eager to reach with its informational pictures. These subjects are more likely to be appreciated and discussed by family groups than by the downtown theatre-goers. In the shaping of attitudes on important issues and problems the neighborhood and small town theatres are supreme. The authorities should do all in their power to help, not cripple, the independent theatres.

"This side of the argument has not been sufficiently stressed. It is up to the exhibitors to see to it that it is properly understood in their communities, especially by local officials."

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1943

No. 7

Some Good Out of the Consent Decree

Although the relief afforded the independent exhibitors by the Consent Decree has not been altogether satisfactory, proof that some of the provisions have been and still are beneficial is to be found in the recent decision handed down by Mr. Philip E. James, arbitrator at the New Orleans tribunal.

His decision has a particular significance, since it is considered within industry circles to be the broadest and most far-reaching interpretation yet given to Section VI of the Consent Decree, which reads partly as follows:

"No distributor defendant shall refuse to license its pictures for exhibition in an exhibitor's theatre on some run (to be designated by the distributor) upon terms and conditions fixed by the distributor which are not calculated to defeat the purpose of this section, if the exhibitor can satisfy reasonable minimum standards of theatre operation and is reputable and responsible, unless the granting of a run on any terms to such exhibitor for said theatre will have the effect of reducing the distributor's total film revenue in the competitive area in which such exhibitor's theatre is located. . . ."

The case involved the Lakeview Theatre in New Orleans, as complainant, and Paramount, RKO, and Warners, as defendants. The Lakeview, which was built early in 1942, charged that the distributors denied it a run from January 28, 1942, the day it opened, until April 15, 1942, on which date the Beacon Theatre, operated by the United Theatres Circuit, was opened two blocks distant. After the Beacon's opening, the distributors offered product to the Lakeview for second run in the area, subsequent to a first run in favor of the Beacon.

Following are the facts that brought on the complaint:

R. E. Smith, a New Orleans real estate operator, who built and developed the suburb in which the Lakeview is situated, had urged both the United Theatres and the distributors to build a theatre to serve the community. When they showed no interest in the project, Mr. Smith decided to build a theatre himself. As Mr. Smith's Lakeview Theatre neared completion, United Theatres began construction of the Beacon two blocks away. Although the Lakeview opened first, and was the only theatre operating in the locality for a few months, it was unable to buy first run product from the three distributors.

The case was originally filed on January 30, 1942, and on May 9 Arbitrator T. W. Bethea agreed to the dismissal of Paramount as a defendant, but ordered RKO and Warners to offer product to the Lakeview

on some run, "on terms not calculated to defeat the purpose of Section VI of the Consent Decree."

On May 21, RKO appealed the award, but the appeal board upheld the arbitrator's decision, reversed the dismissal of Paramount as a defendant, and ordered it to abide by the ruling. The appeal board then remanded the case to the arbitrator, directing him to "receive and consider the offer of a run to be made by the defendants and the terms and conditions thereof, to determine whether such are calculated to defeat the purpose of Section VI." The board added that, "while an arbitrator is powerless under the Decree to require the defendants to grant complainant a run prior to that of the chain theatre to which a run had been granted before it was even completed, nevertheless arbitrators are empowered to require that the terms and conditions under which a run is granted shall afford fair treatment to complainant. Otherwise the purpose of this section will be defeated."

Having joined the armed forces, Mr. Bethea, the arbitrator, was unable to carry out the appeal board's directive. Mr. James, his law partner, was substituted in his place.

Mr. James found that the runs offered by the distributors were "on terms and conditions that are clearly calculated to defeat the intent and purposes of Section VI."

Recalling the fact that the Lakeview was in operation before the Beacon, Mr. James, in his opinion, wrote: "This startling statement of fact, amply supported by testimony, is common knowledge in the vicinity and entirely satisfies me that it is the determination of the circuit to drive the complainant from the competitive area at a staggering financial loss, for it goes without saying that the circuit has sufficient buying power and volume to force the local distributors to accede to their every wish.

"It is well known that the suit which gave birth to the Decree was brought by the United States against an alleged motion picture trust under the Sherman Act. In an effort to avoid multiplicity of suits the parties to the Decree agreed to arbitrate and the practices which are made arbitrable were set forth as acts done in pursuance of an unlawful combination and conspiracy in restraint of trade.

"Obviously this was an attempt to destroy once and for all the continued operation of an illegal trust and the distributors signing the Decree was further proof that they also considered the trust atmosphere unhealthy and were willing to cooperate in its future elimination. In addition thereto every writing upon

(Continued on last page)

**"A Stranger in Town" with Frank Morgan,
Richard Carlson and Jean Rogers**
(MGM, no release date set; time, 67 min.)

Very good program entertainment. It is a picture that any type of audience should enjoy for it combines comedy with deep human interest. Frank Morgan is excellent as the Supreme Court Justice, who, on a hunting trip incognito, guides a young attorney in his efforts to break up a small-town political ring. The court room scenes are extremely interesting and humorous; Richard Carlson, aided by Morgan's pointers on law, compels the corrupt local judge to decide cases in his favor. The closing scenes where Morgan discloses his identity and exposes the ring is stirring; in an inspiring speech, he urges the townspeople to preserve freedom and justice. The action is fast, and one's interest never lags:—

While on a duck-hunting vacation in the small town of Greenport, Frank Morgan, a U. S. Supreme Court Justice, traveling incognito, is haled to court by a crooked game warden for a minor infraction of the game rules. In Court, Morgan observes the travesties of justice practiced by Porter Hall, the local Judge, one of a political ring dominated by Robert Barrat, the Mayor. Morgan makes the acquaintance of Richard Carlson, a young attorney, who was running against the Mayor in the elections. Carlson seemed unable to get ahead either in court or in politics. Without revealing his identity, Morgan takes an interest in Carlson, giving him pointers on how to beat the "fixed" court. Jean Rogers, Morgan's secretary, arrives in town with some important papers, and she is met at the station by Carlson. He takes her to the local hotel where one of Barrat's henchmen insult her. A fight ensues, and both Jean and Carlson land in jail. Aided by Morgan's advice, Carlson gains a dismissal of the charges. To counter Carlson's rising popularity, Barrat arranges for his henchmen to evict Carlson from his office so that he would become an object of ridicule. This precipitates a street fight, in which Morgan is injured slightly. His ire roused, Morgan corners the local judge and discloses his identity. He compels the judge to issue warrants for the arrest of the Mayor and his hoodlums and, at a public hearing, exposes and breaks up the political ring. Carlson wins the election and marries Jean.

Isobel Lennert and William Kozlenko wrote the screen play, Robert Sisk produced it, and Roy Rowland directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Secrets of the Underworld" with
John Hubbard, Virginia Grey
and Lloyd Corrigan**
(Republic, December 18; time, 70 min.)

The good direction and the engaging performances of the leading players lifts this melodrama above the level of average program entertainment; it should make a satisfactory supporting feature in most situations. The story, which deals with the tracking down of an Axis spy ring dealing in counterfeit War Stamps, follows a formula, but the romantic angle involving the district attorney and a girl reporter provides the film with its lighter moments, at which time it is at its best. The closing scenes where a contingent of WAACS help to capture the spies are both humorous and exciting:—

Miles Mander, a French refugee artist, is compelled by Axis agents to engrave plates for counterfeiting war stamps, lest harm come to Robin Raymond, his

daughter, who was held prisoner in Paris. When Mander learns that Robin had escaped and sailed for New York, he manages to elude the spies, taking with him a trunk full of stamps. He telephones the district attorney and arranges protection for Robin. Assistant District Attorney John Hubbard meets Robin at the boat, and finds her to be impulsively romantic. Virginia Grey, a girl reporter and Hubbard's fiancée, resents Robin. At the dock, Robin receives a baggage check and a note from her father, only to have it snatched from her hand by a stranger, who escapes into the crowd. Through Olin Howlin, a baggage clerk, Hubbard learns that the trunk had been sent to a charity auction to be held on the following day under the supervision of Lloyd Corrigan, a French stylist. Hubbard attends the auction, as does Virginia and Neil Hamilton, Hubbard's rival. Hamilton outbids Marla Shelton, a WAACS commander, for the trunk. When it is opened, Mander's body is found inside. While Hubbard attempts to solve the crime, Howlin is murdered, and Robin disappears. Virginia decides to do some investigating on her own. She learns that Robin had last been seen in Corrigan's salon, and that she had been taken to a dairy farm. Through Miss Shelton, Virginia arranges for the WAACS to take over the dairy farm for drill work, while she searches for Robin. Virginia is captured by the spies, and she learns that Corrigan was their leader. Meanwhile Hubbard had uncovered evidence that brings him to the farm and, with the aid of the WAACS, he rounds up the spies and frees the girls.

Robert Tasker and Geoffrey Homes wrote the screen play, Leonard Fields produced it, and William Morgan directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Hi'Ya Chum" with the Ritz Brothers,
Jane Frazee and Robert Paige**
(Universal, March 15; time, 61 min.)

An enjoyable program comedy with music. What there is in the way of a story is nonsensical, but it should more than satisfy the followers of the Ritz Brothers whose comedy routines, most of which are of the slapstick variety, dominate the scene. A highly amusing situation is where a group of gangsters, bent on starting a riot in a night club, go into hysterics when the chorus girls administer laughing gas to them. In addition to furnishing the romantic interest, Robert Paige and Jane Frazee sing a few numbers. It is a fast-moving film designed for laughs, and it succeeds in getting them:—

With little money in their pockets and their show closed down, the Ritz Brothers start out for Hollywood in their broken-down car, accompanied by Jane Frazee and June Clyde, a sister act. They get as far as Mercury, a boom town, where their funds run out. After a series of mishaps in which they cause the chef of the only restaurant in town to quit his job, the Ritz Brothers are compelled to do the cooking. Displeased with their cooking, the war workers, headed by Robert Paige, decide to run them out of town. But Jane and June save the day by taking over the kitchen. Paige is so pleased with their cooking that he gives them the restaurant. Edmund MacDonald, a gambler, approaches the girls and offers to turn the restaurant into a gambling joint. Jane refuses, despite the objections of June. MacDonald opens up his own establishment, and June joins him. But when June sees that MacDonald was fleecing the workers, she leaves him and returns to Jane. In order to stop the workers from

gambling, the girls decide to turn the restaurant into a night club, thereby attracting the workers away from MacDonald's place. Facing bankruptcy, MacDonald imports a gang of hoodlums, and instructs them to wreck the night club. Paige, however, learns of the plan. By using a laughing gas mixture, which he gives to the chorus girls to administer to the hoodlums, Paige and the Ritz Brothers foil the plot.

Edmund L. Hartmann wrote the screen play, Howard Benedict produced it, and Harold Young directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Cabin in the Sky" with Ethel Waters, Lena Horne and Eddie "Rochester" Anderson

(MGM, no release date set; time, 98 min.)

A delightful entertainment. Adapted from the Broadway musical stage play of the same title, the film captures all the innocence and humor of the traditionally accepted characteristics of the Negro. It has been produced well, and the performances are very good, but its appeal may be limited; it is a fantasy, and the cast is all-colored. The story revolves around an erring but ingratiating Negro, who dreams that both the Lord and the Devil seek his soul. Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, as the wastrel, does his best work to date. As "Rochester's" God-fearing wife, Ethel Waters recreates the role she played on the stage, and she distinguishes herself both in acting and in song. Lena Horne is exceptionally good as the lustful temptress who makes it difficult for "Rochester" to follow the straight and narrow path. But her actions are quite suggestive, and the situations where she tries to entice "Rochester" are a bit too risqué for the younger element. The music is outstanding, and there are several good dance sequences, which are executed by the cast with the gusto that is typical of their race:—

When Little Joe Jackson ("Rochester") dies from wounds inflicted by Domino Johnson (John W. Sublett), a gambler, Lucifer, Jr., (Rex Ingram) and the Lord's General (Kenneth Spencer) vie for his soul. Moved by the sorrow of Petunia (Ethel Waters), Joe's wife, the General give Joe six months in which to atone for his sins, and be saved from hell. Joe is brought back to life with no recollection of his moment in eternity. Neither he nor Petunia can see or hear Lucifer, Jr., or the General, but they both feel their conflicting influences. Aided by Petunia, and her faith in Heaven, Joe becomes a respectable citizen. But Lucifer, Jr., in his determination to win another soul, arranges for Joe to win a sweepstakes prize, and sees to it that the seductive Georgia Brown (Lena Horne), with whom Joe had been friendly in the past, delivers the news to him. Happy that he will now be able to buy Petunia many nice things, Joe embraces Georgia. But Petunia comes upon the two and, misunderstanding, orders Joe to leave. Joe takes up with Georgia, and returns to his gambling ways. Determined to get her man back, Petunia puts on a flashy dress, and goes to a cafe where Joe and Georgia are making merry. Petunia rouses Joe's jealousy by becoming friendly with Domino. Joe starts a fight with Domino, who whips out a gun. Petunia, in an effort to save Joe, is killed, as is her erring husband. The General informs Petunia that she may go to heaven, but that Joe must go with Lucifer, Jr. Petunia, however, prays to the Lord, and Joe is allowed to accompany her. As they reach the Pearly Gates, Joe awakens; it had all been a dream. Instructing Petunia to throw away his

sweepstakes ticket, and with it his dice, Joe determines to lead a good life.

Joseph Schrank wrote the screen play, Arthur Freed and Albert Lewis produced it, and Vincente Minnelli directed it. The cast includes Louis Armstrong, Manton Moreland, Willie Best, Moke and Poke, Buck and Bubbles, the Hall Johnson Choir, Duke Ellington's Orchestra and others.

Adult entertainment.

"The Amazing Mrs. Holliday" with Deanna Durbin and Edmond O'Brien
(Universal, February 19; time, 98 min.)

Because of its appealing nature, its good production values, and the always pleasant singing of Deanna Durbin, this human interest drama is a fairly good entertainment. The story, however, is artificial, and the outcome is obvious. Moreover, it is somewhat slow-paced. The film marks Miss Durbin's return to the screen after more than a year's absence. Audiences will find that, although more matured, she has retained her charm and acting ability. As an American teacher in a Chinese mission school, Miss Durbin awakens sympathy by her struggle to take care of nine orphaned children, with whom she makes her way out of war-torn China to San Francisco. The scenes in which the children appear are appealing. There is a considerable amount of comedy, as well as romantic interest. Among the songs sung by Miss Durbin are two Chinese lullabies:—

Because of the Japanese destruction in China, and the death of her missionary uncle, Deanna Durbin, an American teacher, is compelled to evacuate nine orphaned children. With the aid of Barry Fitzgerald, a ship's steward, Deanna and her charges stow away on a ship owned by wealthy old Commodore Harry Davenport. En route to San Francisco the ship is torpedoed. Deanna, Fitzgerald, and eight of the children are cast away in a life boat, while the Commodore and one child are presumably lost. Picked up at sea, Deanna and the children reach San Francisco where immigration officials deny the children admission to the United States unless bonds are posted for them. Fitzgerald takes Deanna to the Commodore's mansion where Frieda Inescort, Elizabeth Risdon, and Grant Mitchell, members of the family, refuse to help her. Fitzgerald informs then that Deanna and the Commodore had been married at sea, but that the records had been lost. As the Commodore's widow, Deanna takes over the mansion, and she is permitted to bring her wards into the country. Embarrassed by the position in which Fitzgerald's lie had placed her, Deanna attempts to leave with the children, but Edmond O'Brien, the Commodore's grandson, intercepts her. She confesses, and O'Brien orders her to remain until he can arrange to adopt the children. Although Deanna and O'Brien fall in love, she tries to leave. But O'Brien persuades her to stay, and induces her to sing at a China Relief ball to be held in the mansion. In the midst of the party, the Commodore arrives. Instead of exposing Deanna, he accepts her as his "wife" and actually plans to marry her. He soon realizes, however, that Deanna and O'Brien were in love; he relinquishes her to O'Brien, but adopts the children as his own.

Frank Ryan and John Jacoby wrote the screen play, and Bruce Manning produced and directed it. Frank Shaw is the associate producer. The cast includes Arthur Treacher, Gus Schilling, Jonathan Hale, Christopher Severn and others.

Morally suitable for all.

the Decree, its background and purposes, clearly show that it should be liberally constructed in favor of the independent exhibitors."

While granting that the distributors had a right to select their own customers, Mr. James said, "If Section VI was created for the purpose of according fair treatment to independent exhibitors . . . then it is impossible to reconcile the statement that selection of customers can be entirely arbitrary unless is added 'provided the purposes of Section VI are met'."

Stating that a second run would compel the Lakeview to close its doors inasmuch as the community does not offer sufficient patronage for two runs, Mr. James said: "In my opinion the offering of a second run is tantamount to no offer at all and if justified by a strict interpretation of the Consent Decree, will stifle competition, destroy initiative and further a monopoly. In fact, the Decree conceived in equity will appear ludicrous in application."

Mr. James suggested that a fair solution would be the granting of a first run to both theatres, since there is ample product to take care of their needs. He added that the "only effect of such action would be the probable increase of film revenues in the area."

Mr. James concluded his findings by stating: "Unless Section VI can be interpreted as providing for an examination of the 'run' as to reasonableness it follows likewise that the sham of healthy relations now existing between local distributors and exhibitors will be thrown aside and the independent exhibitor relegated to the previously existing cumbersome and inadequate relief."

Paramount, RKO, and Warners have already filed a formal appeal to Mr. James' findings.

This decision is far-reaching in that it considers inadequate an offer of some run when such run does not remove the inequity suffered by the exhibitor. The mere fact that a distributor lives up to the written requirements of a provision does not suffice; he must also live up to the true intent and purposes of such a provision. That is how it should be.

There can be no question regarding the Lakeview Theatre's right to a first run, nor is there any doubt about the fact that the United Theatres Circuit, in collaboration with the distributors, adopted a buying and selling plan designed to force the Lakeview out of business.

Prior to the arbitration set-up instituted by the Decree, there was no way by which the Lakeview could compel a distributor to recognize its rights in the matter, except through court action—an expensive process, and one that takes time. In all probability the Lakeview, by the time it would win the case, might go out of business.

The broad interpretation given to the Decree by Mr. James is indicative of the manner in which other arbitrators construe its meaning and intent, despite the definite limitations placed upon their power to deal with the industry's underlying faults. These arbitrators realize that liberal construction and broad interpretations are necessary if the Decree, which was designed to help the little fellow, is to serve its purpose.

* * *

In the January issue of "Arbitration in Action," a new monthly journal published by the American Arbitration Association, an article, under the heading "Arbitration Presents a Paradox," reviews the part arbitration has played and is playing in the motion picture industry under the Consent Decree.

Pointing out that the arbitration organization was set up to handle an anticipated volume of thousands of cases, because judging by the previous history of dissention in the industry such a set-up was called for, actually no more than one hundred and forty-eight disputes were arbitrated in the first year, and this number declined to one hundred and seventeen in the second year.

The association contributes the low number of arbitrated disputes to the fact that, the more arbitration is made available to parties in a controversy, the less necessary it becomes; with arbitration available the parties start talking on a new basis and in a friendly spirit, and the difficulty is settled between themselves on the basis of reason and merit. Knowing that arbitration would find the reason and resolve the merit of the case, they "beat the arbitrator to the draw" and settle the dispute without him.

This report is particularly gratifying to this paper, which in its issue of March 1, 1941, at a time when many in the industry questioned the value of the arbitration clause of the Consent Decree, stated in part:

"That arbitration to settle inter-industry disputes was needed, no one can dispute; and there was no other way of getting it nationally without fear of court intervention, with possible penalties, except through the Consent Decree.

"It is the opinion of this paper that, once arbitration has established precedents to guide future action of those engaged in the three branches of the industry, the number of controversies will diminish. Clearance may be the only question that will keep on causing disputes, by reason of the fact that conditions will keep on changing constantly, and the rights of distributors to grant clearance, and of the different classes of exhibitors to enjoy it, will vary frequently. But as long as there will be a means of settling them quickly and effectively, the entire industry will profit."

WE MUST GUARD AGAINST DISCRIMINATORY STATE TAX PROPOSALS

The convening of forty-three state legislatures this past month marks, what might be called, open season on the amusement industry, which has long been a favorite target of legislators in search of new revenue. Since the states have suffered considerable losses in revenue as a result of gas rationing and the general reduction in the use of motor cars, it is reasonable to assume that more than the usual number of proposals discriminating against the industry will be introduced at the various sessions.

For example, weekly *Variety* reports that one of several bills introduced at the Indiana State Assembly is a bill that would provide a tax of three percent on all amusements and athletic contests as a means of financing free textbooks for elementary schools. The bill would place a flat tax on all amusement admissions over ten cents, the tax to be levied against the operators, and not against the public directly.

The only effective means by which exhibitors can combat the efforts made to burden the industry with additional taxes is through organized representation.

If you do not already belong to an exhibitor organization, you should; the more members an organization has in its ranks, the more powerful will be the protests it makes. Every dollar you pay in dues will bring you back many times that sum in protection.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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No. 8

In Defense of the Small-Town Exhibitor

In the past few months many of the nation's newspapers have taken to lauding the motion picture industry in recognition of its war-time services.

In New York City, for example, the newspapers, through a series of institutional advertisements, are publicizing the war activities of the industry as a whole, and are urging the public to "take time out for relaxation" by attending motion picture theatres. Among other things, the advertisements point out that motion pictures afford the best insurance against "wartime worries and wartime fatigue."

In addition to the heaping of words of praise, the newspapers were quick to come to the support of the industry, which viewed with considerable skepticism Lowell Mellett's request that all scripts be submitted to the OWI before they are produced. The newspapers felt that, like themselves, the motion picture screen should be kept free of government interference, aside from matters pertinent to the war effort.

Although the newspapers have filled columns with their comments on the industry's usefulness during these times, few of them have been cognizant of the fact that, because of the government's failure to grant the industry an essential rating, many theatres have been and will be forced to close their doors.

This condition is particularly apparent in small towns where gas rationing and the "no pleasure driving" ban prevent patrons in outlying districts and rural areas from attending the theatre, thus depriving them of vitally needed motion picture entertainment, which, in many cases, is the only kind of entertainment that they can afford.

One of the few newspapers to have recognized this problem is the *Goshen Democrat and Independent Republican*, a Goshen, N. Y., newspaper, which, in its issue of January 21, 1943, under the heading "Reward for Patriotism," had this to say:

"Last September, Goshen Theatre promoted a month-long sale of War Savings Bonds and Stamps as its part in a nationwide theatre effort to encourage public purchase of Bonds and Stamps. It gave free admission to every purchaser of a Bond. It gave a \$25 Bond to the women's organization achieving the largest Bond sale during the month. When the sales were totaled at month's end it was learned the theatre effort had resulted in Bonds and Stamps proceeds of more than \$13,000. . . . Now Goshen Theatre, and the theatre industry in general—particularly those of the rural areas—is being repaid with interest by the OPA for its hearty cooperation in selling Bonds and Stamps

and ballyhooing patriotism in a dozen different ways. Its patriotic war efforts are being rewarded by the 'no pleasure driving' ban which is effectively ruining theatres everywhere except in the largest cities.

"A year ago this month, Goshen Theatre played a leading role in rousing the patriotic spirit in this small town that raised the local Red Cross chapter's \$5,000 War Fund quota in less than a month. It donated nightly use of its stage for Red Cross appeal speakers. Its screen space advertising rights, which it has steadfastly refused to sell for any price, were freely given to ballyhoo the appeal. It gave nightly space in its lobby for a War Fund contribution booth. . . . Now it is being rewarded for its patriotism by having the Gestapo agents of the OPA lurk in wait for any potential customer who dares park his car within a stone's throw of the theatre.

"Scarcely a month has gone by since the United States entered the war that Goshen Theatre has not played a major role in plugging one war effort after another. Its management has considered no effort too great to help rouse and stimulate patriotic fervor and zeal. Its constant aid and assistance has brought untold thousands of dollars into the nation's war chest. . . . Now it is being repaid by the OPA with interest—an interest that deprives it of 50 to 75 percent of its patronage; an interest that makes it a party to a crime against patriotism if someone so much as parks an automobile within view of its structure.

"No local industry has done more for the war effort, and none has been forced to make such a sacrifice. It's against the OPA's law to use rationed gasoline to drive to the theatre, but the OPA this week virtually urged holders of rationed food coupons to drive to hotels and restaurants to partake of food they don't require, without having to surrender their ration coupons in order to do so. 'Experience here and abroad,' said the OPA directive, 'shows that dining out for the average family is an important recreational lift for morale.' What greater 'recreational life for morale' is there, we'd like to know, than an evening at a good motion picture show? Why are hotels and restaurants, which do nothing for the war effort as compared with the theatre, and which are taking the scarcest food commodities out of the reach of the average household, favored as recreational centers by the OPA over the theatre? Such unrighteous injustice in a democracy stinks louder than the human ferrets of the OPA who snoop about looking for violators of the 'no pleasure driving' rule.

(Continued on last page)

"Laugh Your Blues Away" with Bert Gordon and Jinx Falkenburg

(Columbia, November 12; time, 70 min.)

This comedy, although offering little that is novel in the way of a story or of treatment, is amusing program fare. In spite of the fact that the story, which is based on the deception theme, is thin, it has several highly amusing situations, and the action, for the most part, keeps one chuckling. Bert Gordon, "The Mad Russian," of radio fame, provokes much laughter by his twisting of the English language. Jinx Falkenburg is charming as a bogus Russian Princess. In addition to singing a few songs, she displays her prowess at swimming, diving and tennis. The production values are fairly good and, despite the triteness of the material, the performances are adequate:—

When her husband's finances dwindled, Isobel Elsom, a social climber, invites Vivien Oakland and Dick Elliott, a wealthy Texas couple, to visit her. Miss Elsom plans to match Douglass Drake, her son, with Phyllis Kennedy, Elliott's daughter. To impress the Texans, Miss Elsom arranges for a reception in their honor, and employs a group of actors and actresses to pose as members of the aristocracy. Among those employed are Bert Gordon, who poses as a Russian Prince, and Jinx Falkenburg, a blues singer, who poses as Gordon's "sister." At the reception, Jinx and Douglass fall in love with each other. Miss Elsom, however, does her utmost to keep them apart so that Douglass would pay more attention to Phyllis. Dissatisfied with the way her plan was working, Miss Elsom confides to Miss Oakland that she intended to announce Douglass' and Phyllis' engagement at a masquerade party to be held on the following evening. Knowing that her daughter was in love with Frank Sully, a cowboy, Miss Oakland telephones him and instructs him to fly to the estate in order to foil Miss Elsom's plan. Sully does this, and Miss Oakland announces his engagement to Phyllis, beating Miss Elsom to the punch. Relieved, Douglass goes into the garden in search of his "Russian Princess," only to overhear Jinx tell a friend that she was a fake. Douglass walks out of her life. Heartbroken, Jinx returns to her blues singing. Soon after, Douglass learns of his mother's deception, and realizes that Jinx was innocent. Through Gordon, he traces her to a night club and asks her to forgive him.

Harry Sauber wrote the screen play, Jack Fier produced it, and Charles Barton directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Ape Man" with Bela Lugosi and Wallace Ford

(Monogram, March 5; time, 63 min.)

A routine program horror melodrama. The story revolves around a scientist, who, after turning himself partly into an ape, murders humans in order to acquire from them the spinal fluids he needs to cure himself. A similar theme was used in Monogram's "The Ape," produced in 1940. It is far-fetched stuff, and the treatment lacks originality, but it is chilling enough to satisfy the followers of this type of entertainment. Throughout the action a silly looking character appears in many scenes. It is not until the end that he identifies himself as the author and remarks, "Silly, isn't it?" That just about sums up the picture:—

Minerva Urecal returns from Europe in answer to a cable from Dr. Henry Hall, who explains that Dr. Bela Lugosi, her brother had disappeared. Wallace Ford and Louise Currie, reporters, are assigned to cover the story. Later, Hall informs Miss Urecal that Lugosi had not disappeared, but had secreted himself because he had injected a fluid into his body that changed him partly into an ape. To regain his form, Lugosi required spinal fluid from a living person, but the person so operated on would die. Hall refuses to help Lugosi obtain the fluid. Louise and Ford interview Miss Urecal, and they suspect that she is withholding the truth.

Meanwhile Lugosi murders Hall's butler, and forces Hall to inject the spinal fluid into him. When the experiment is only partially successful, Lugosi, with the help of a monstrous ape, sets out on a series of murders and obtains a large quantity of the fluid. He goes to Hall, who refuses to inject the fluid. In the ensuing struggle, the bottle containing the fluid is smashed. Lugosi, in a rage, kills Hall and starts back for his home. There he finds Louise, searching for clues, and he forcibly takes her down to his secret laboratory. During her attempts to evade Lugosi, Louise accidentally releases the catch of the ape's cage. The ape kills Lugosi and goes after Louise. But Ford and the police arrive in time to save her and kill the ape.

Barney Sarecky wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman and Jack Dietz produced it, and William Beaudine directed it. Too horrifying for children.

"Somewhere in France" with Constance Cummings, Tommy Trinder and Clifford Evans

(United Artists, release date not set; time, 84 min.)

While there is nothing extraordinary about the story, this British-made war melodrama holds one's interest pretty well, and offers a number of thrills. The action takes place during the fall of France, and deals with the adventures of a British factory foreman, who, with the aid of an American girl, two British Tommies, and an army truck, saves three vital machines from the advancing Nazis. Their trek across France is filled with situations that are exciting and deeply emotional; the spectator is touched by the plight of the fleeing French refugees, who are mercilessly machine-gunned by the Luftwaffe. The French atmosphere is extremely realistic. There is some comedy and romance, without interfering with the action:—

Clifford Evans, foreman of a British war factory, fears that three vital machines, sent to France by his firm, are in danger of falling into the hands of the Nazis. Despite the obstinacy of British officials, Evans embarks for France. When his train reached La Tour, orders are received to evacuate the district; the Germans were approaching. Evans continues to Bivry by bicycle, foiling a fifth-column station-master, who attempts to stop him. Reaching the French factory, Evans finds that Constance Cummings, an American secretary, was the only person who had not yet abandoned the plant. Robert Morley, the town's Mayor, arrives at the factory, and offers to help Evans remove the machines. Constance, however, warns him that the Mayor was in league with the Nazis. Soon after the Mayor leaves to fetch a truck, Evans comes upon Tommy Trinder and Gordon Jackson, two British soldiers, who had lost their unit. Evans convinces them of the importance of his mission, and they agree to help him remove the machines. The three men and Constance travel up the coast of France along roads choked with fleeing French refugees. On the way they pick up a group of children with a nun, whose vehicle had broken down. Nazi planes strafe the refugees, and the nun is killed. They continue their journey and, after many events, reach Montreux where they leave the children at a convent. Here they run into a trap set by a German agent posing as a British officer. But they manage to outwit him, and to make their escape. Nearing La Roquette, they find their way blocked by advance German units. They manage to reach a small port nearby, arriving in time to find a small fishing boat, crowded with refugees. Francis Scully, the skipper, agrees to take them aboard, but protests that there is no room for the machines. The refugees, however, offer to leave their personal belongings behind so that the machines can be taken to England.

Angus Macphail, John Dighton, and Leslie Arliss wrote the screen play, Michael Balcon produced it, and Charles Frend directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"How's About It" with the Andrews Sisters, Robert Paige and Grace MacDonald

(Universal, February 5; time, 61 min.)

As in most of the other modestly produced comedies with music Universal specializes in, this one, too, has no story to speak of: nevertheless, it is a diverting entertainment. The musical numbers, which are of the popular variety, are good, and should be of help in selling the picture to the younger crowd. In addition to the singing of the Andrews Sisters, there is some excellent tap dancing by young Bobby Scheerer. The actions of Shemp Howard and Mary Wickes provoke considerable laughter. There is a romance, which is developed according to formula:—

On the verge of taking a long-postponed vacation, Robert Paige, a music publisher, is compelled to postpone his trip when Shemp Howard, a process server, serves him with a writ to appear in court; Grace MacDonald, a poetess, had filed a one hundred thousand dollar suit against him, alleging theft of a verse. On the advice of Walter Catlett, his attorney, Paige visits Grace in an attempt to settle the suit out of court. She agrees to a truce when he offers her a job as a songwriter, despite the objections of Dave Bruce, her attorney. Before long Paige discovers that he is in love with Grace. One day Bruce visits Grace at the office, and she tells him of how much she loves Paige. In the midst of the conversation Paige walks in, hears her telling of her great love, and believes that it is meant for Bruce. They quarrel, and Grace revives her suit. Grace and Paige meet in court, and both disapprove of the bitterness in the arguments their attorneys present to the judge. In the midst of the proceedings, Paige denounces his attorney, and Grace does the same with her attorney. Grace and Paige embrace, and the judge dismisses the case. Meanwhile Shemp Howard had become infatuated with Patty Andrews, of the Andrews Sisters, and had promised to get her an audition with Buddy Rich's Orchestra. When Howard is unable to keep his promise, Paige comes to his rescue and arranges the audition. The Andrews Sisters achieve success.

Mel Ronson wrote the screen play, Ken Goldsmith produced it, and Erle C. Kenton directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"One Dangerous Night" with Warren William, Eric Blore and Marguerite Chapman

(Columbia, January 21; time, 77 min.)

A good addition to the "Lone Wolf" series of program melodramas. It is fast-moving and exciting; and, since the mystery is not solved until the end, it naturally holds one's attention. As in the other pictures, Warren William, a reformed jewel thief, is suspected of the crime. But, in his usual suave manner, he proves his innocence by outwitting the police and trapping the murderer. Much laughter is provoked by the antics of Eric Blore, William's butler. Although there are a number of women in the cast, there is no romantic interest:—

Stranded when her car runs out of gas, Marguerite Chapman is given a lift by Warren William and Eric Blore, his butler, who take her to the home of Gerald Mohr. After leaving her, William discovers that Blore had stolen Marguerite's purse. They return to Mohr's home and, getting no response to their knocks, enter the house and discover Mohr dead. The police arrive as the two men examine the body. Inspector Thurston Hall, who had long been trying to catch William, accuses him of the crime. Realizing that he must find the guilty party to prove his own innocence, William escapes from the police. With Blore's aid, he traces Marguerite to a party. He learns that Mohr had been blackmailing her, as well as Mona Barrie, an actress, and Tara Birell, wife of a prominent physician. The three women were

at Mohr's home at the time of the murder, but all profess their innocence. At the party, William is recognized by Warren Asche, a gossip columnist, who knew William was wanted by the police. William offers to give Asche an exclusive story, if he will give him a chance to prove his innocence. Asche agrees. Learning that the dead man was to meet a mysterious woman with whom he intended to elope, William hurries to the airport. He spots the woman, but she flees. William trails her to a hotel and, while questioning her, she is mysteriously shot and wounded. Leaving her in the care of a doctor, William rushes to the theatre to question Mona. There he finds everyone suspected of the crime, as well as Inspector Hall, who had been called by Asche. Once again William escapes from Hall. He returns to the mysterious woman's apartment. As he questions her, Asche arrives and attempts to kill her. Subdued, Asche confesses that he is her husband, and that he had murdered Mohr.

Donald Davis wrote the screen play, David Chatkin produced it, and Michael Gordon directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Young and Willing" with William Holden, Robert Benchley, Susan Hayward and Eddie Bracken

(United Artists, February 15; time, 83 min.)

Mildly amusing. Based on the New York stage play, "Out of the Frying Pan," this comedy-drama revolves around a group of young aspirants for the stage, three boys and three girls, who platonically share one apartment while seeking employment. There are a few good comedy situations here and there, but on the whole it is a draggy affair hindered by too much talk, most of which is silly and monotonous. Moreover, many of the situations are nonsensical. It may do as a supporting feature, but most audiences will find it tiresome. The performances are uninspired:—

Without funds, but determined to win success, six stage-struck youngsters share the Greenwich Village apartment of Martha O'Driscoll, whose father in Hoopesville, Ill., paid for the rent. There are three girls: Martha, Barbara Britton, and Susan Hayward; and three boys, William Holden, Eddie Bracken, and James Brown. Unknown to the others, Barbara and Brown are secretly married, and expecting a baby. Martha is visited by Florence MacMichael, a girl from her home town, who believes that the living arrangement is immoral. When the youngsters learn that Robert Benchley, a famous producer, occupied the apartment directly below theirs, they plot to bring themselves to his attention. Susan manages to get into his apartment, but Benchley shies away from her when he learns that she is a would-be actress. Susan learns that he kept the apartment out of sentiment; he had written his first play there. Unfortunately, he had once been unable to pay his rent and the landlady had confiscated his trunk containing the script. The trunk had been lost. Actually the youngsters had that play and they had been rehearsing it, although unaware of its author. Complications arise when Florence returns to the apartment bringing with her Martha's father, who insists that she return home with him. Realizing that they would have to move if Martha left them, the youngsters are discouraged. Benchley, however, discovers that they have his play. Sensing an opportunity, Holden informs Benchley that the script had been lost, but that all remembered their parts. Benchley agrees to their enacting the play and recording it by dictaphone. The youngsters perform badly, but, after playing back the record, Benchley realizes that it would make a great burlesque mystery melodrama, and decides to produce the show.

Virginia Van Upp wrote the screen play, and Edward H. Griffith produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"How are theatres to keep operating, how are they to continue to help raise the funds by their patriotic ballyhoos that pay the OPA Gestapo if the OPA, in its gasoline policy, arbitrarily whittles away the territory from which they draw their patrons? Concededly, in a town like Goshen, or in any other municipality with a theatre in its midst, the people living there should walk to the theatre to conserve precious gasoline. No one can have any righteous objections to that. For any local residents who object to walking from their homes to the theatres, we hold no brief. They should do so gladly as a trivial patriotic endeavor.

"But Goshen Theatre has been drawing from 50 to 75 percent of its patronage from the strictly rural areas—from isolated farms, from nearby small hamlets and communities that have no theatre of their own, from places from which the only means of transportation is the family car. Should these people be denied the right of recreation the theatre affords them? Should the theatres be denied the right of these people's patronage and placed in a class indiscriminately with such amusement resorts as the corner gin-mill to which driving is forbidden as 'non-essential'? If the heads of the OPA gestapo are too dense to understand that theatres are one of the greatest factors in maintaining civilian morale, if they are too stupid to appreciate the multiplicity of war efforts the theatres have advanced, then the OPA should be rechristened with a 'QUE' added to its alphabetical monicker.

"Our government sees to it that our soldiers and sailors are provided nightly with movies. It should show equal consideration for the harassed and abused civilians of the homefront. And it shouldn't be stupid enough in spite of all its other crass stupidities, to try and knock out of existence a theatre that enriched its war fund coffers to the extent of \$13,000 in a single month. It should think of itself, even though it pays no heed to one of our most patriotic institutions—the American Theatre."

This paper concurs heartily with the preceding remarks and, in behalf of small-town exhibitors everywhere, thanks the *Goshen Democrat* and *Independent Republican* for championing their cause.

The predicament the Goshen Theatre finds itself in, has its counterpart in thousands of small towns throughout the country where the local theatre, through its undiminished patriotic efforts, has become the focal point of the community's war activities, and the favored assembling place of the people.

It is indeed unfortunate, and certainly not within the dictates of good common sense, that theatres, which are admittedly an integral part of the war effort, now find that their endeavors are hamstrung by government decrees that do not recognize their essentiality.

It is even more unfortunate that theatres, which through its motion picture screens are a most powerful medium in the influencing of public opinion, dare not use their facilities to make known their plight, lest they be accused of unpatriotic motives.

The job of awakening the public to the fact that they face a curtailment of entertainment, because of the closing down of theatres, is one that the newspapers are best fitted for; when others take up our fight, the facts ring more true.

This paper does not know if the owner of the Goshen Theatre had any part in influencing his local newspaper editor to write the foregoing editorial. But if he did, then he is to be congratulated.

If every small-town exhibitor would discuss his plight with his local newspaper editor, and would induce that editor to write a piece calling attention to the theatre's value to the community, overwhelming public opinion may compel the government to grant the industry the essential rating it so richly deserves.

LET US GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

In a recent issue of the *Hollywood Reporter*, Billy Wilkerson writes of the amazing business being done by "Hitler's Children" in the theatres the picture has played to date. Says Mr. Wilkerson:

"Here is a little picture created from an idea a fellow brought to Koerner and turned out on one of the lowest budgets that RKO has had in many a day. It was knocked out on a short shooting schedule, whipped into shape as fast as human hands and brains could complete it. . . ."

After citing figures, which show that "Hitler's Children" makes the grosses on 'Snow White' look like a 'B' show," Mr. Wilkerson states:

"It just goes to show you, if you have a good idea, give it any kind of intelligent treatment and even a fair amount of production, that there's hardly enough seats in any theatre to accommodate the number of people who will rush the boxoffice today to buy seats. . . . 'Hitler's Children' which on the basis of its Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia grosses, should hit between \$2,000,000 and \$3,000,000 without even a repeat run. Proving that SHOWMANSHIP in production will sell more tickets than all the big star attractions, all the great production expenditure and other expensive overheads. And you must credit Charles Koerner as an ace showman."

It is interesting to note that Billy Wilkerson, in giving credit to Charlie Koerner about "Hitler's Children," has overlooked Eddie Golden entirely.

I don't believe that Charlie Koerner, knowing him as I do, has liked this at all. Though Charlie is responsible for the finishing of the picture in that, when the bank went back on Golden for one hundred thousand dollars and the laboratory for twenty-five thousand, refusing to go through with their end of the bargain, Charlie Koerner stepped in and furnished the money that enabled Eddie Golden to finish the picture. Koerner also guided Eddie by furnishing a good writer and holding down any grandiose ideas as the story was taking shape. But for any trade paper editor to ignore the fact that "Hitler's Children" was the original idea of Eddie Golden, and that Eddie had made the distribution deal with RKO before Charlie Koerner took charge of the studio is to do an injustice to Eddie.

The reason that "Hitler's Children" is successful at the box-office is because it is a great showmanship idea, conceived by Eddie Golden, a trained showman, who had the tenacity to stick to it until he convinced someone that it should be made into a picture. He had many rejections elsewhere, until RKO took it.

Let us give credit where credit is due.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXV

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Tarzan Triumphs—RKO (78 min.)	15
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They Got Me Covered—RKO (95 min.)	3
Three Hearts for Julia—MGM (89 min.)	7
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Thundering Trails—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
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You Can't Beat the Law—Monogram (64 min.)	23

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

4009	A Night to Remember—Young-Aherne	Dec. 10
4210	A Tornado in the Saddle—Hayden (59 m.)	Dec. 15
4004	Commandos Strike at Dawn—Muni-Gish	Jan. 7
4013	City Without Men—Darnell-Duane	Jan. 14
4028	One Dangerous Night—William-Chapman	Jan. 21
	Power of the Press—Tracy-Dickson	Jan. 28
4203	The Fighting Buckaroo—Starrett (58 m.)	Feb. 1
	Reveille With Beverly—Miller-Wright	Feb. 4
	No Place for a Lady—Lindsay-Gargan	Feb. 11
4211	Riders of the Northwest Mounted—Hayden (57 m.)	Feb. 15
	Something to Shout About—Ameche-Blair-Oakie	Feb. 25
	Let's Have Fun—Gordon-Lindsay	Mar. 4
	After Midnite with Boston Blackie—Morris	Mar. 18

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

322	Tennessee Johnson—Van Heflin-Barrymore	Feb.
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Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

	Crime Smasher—Graham-Cromwell	Jan. 29
	Kid Dynamite—East Side Kids	Feb. 5
	You Can't Beat the Law—Norris-Woodbury	Feb. 12
	Haunted Ranch—Range Busters	Feb. 19
	Silver Skates—Kenny-Morison Belita	Feb. 26
	The Ape Man—Lugosi-Ford	Mar. 5
	Robber's Roost—Range Busters	Mar. 12
	No Escape—Carradine-Brian	Mar. 26

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

4215	Lucky Jordan—Ladd-Walker	Feb. 26
4216	Lady Bodyguard—Albert-Shirley	No
4217	Happy Go Lucky—Powell-Martin	Release
4218	Henry Aldrich Gets Glamour—Jimmy Lydon	date set
4219	Night Plane from Chungking—Preston-Drew	May 7

Producers Releasing Corporation

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

358	Billy the Kid Rides Again—Crabbe (56 m.) (re.)	Jan. 27
320	Dead Men Walk—Zucco-Carlisle	Feb. 10
364	Lone Rider No. 2—Livingston (57 m.)	Feb. 12
304	A Night for Crime—Farrell-Talbot	Feb. 18
352	Texas Rangers No. 2—Newill-O'Brien	Mar. 5
312	Queen of Broadway—Crabbe-Hudson	Mar. 8
359	Billy the Kid No. 3—Crabbe	Mar. 12
31	Corregidor—Krugger-Landis (re.)	Mar. 15
311	My Son, The Hero—Karns-Kelly	Apr. 5
365	Lone Rider No. 3—Livingston	Apr. 16

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 210 London Blackout Murders—Abbott-McLeod. Jan. 15
 2301 Boots and Saddles—Gene Autry (re.) Jan. 15
 263 Thundering Trails—Three Mesq. (56 m.) . . . Jan. 25
 211 Fighting Devil Dogs—Powell-Brix (adapted
 from serial of same title) Jan. 29
 274 Dead Man's Gulch—Red Barry (55 m.) (re.) . Feb. 13
 264 Blocked Trail—Steele-Tyler Feb. 26
 2302 South of the Border—Gene Autry (re.)
 (57 m.) Mar. 1
 Idaho—Roy Rogers Mar. 12
 Hit Parade of 1943—Carroll-Hayward . . . Mar. 19
 The Purple V—Archer-McLeod Mar. 26
 Chatterbox—Brown-Canova Apr. 1

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 312 Army Surgeon—Ellison-Wyatt Dec. 24
 313 Cat People—Simon-Conway (re.) Dec. 25
 314 The Great Gildersleeve—Harold Peary (re.) . . Jan. 1
 315 Seven Miles from Alcatraz—Craig-Granville
 (re.) Jan. 8
 383 Fighting Frontier—Tim Holt (57 m.) Jan. 29
 352 They Got Me Covered—Hope-Lamour Feb. 5
 316 Hitler's Children—Holt-Granville Feb. 12
 307 Journey Into Fear—Welles-Cotten-Del Rio . . Feb. 12
 392 Saludos Amigos—Walt Disney (re.) Feb. 19
 317 Two Weeks to Live—Lum-Abner Feb. 19
 318 Cinderella Swings It—Kibbee-Warren Feb. 26
 351 Pride of the Yankees—Cooper-Wright Mar. 5
 319 Tarzan Triumphs—Weissmuller-Gifford . . . Mar. 12
 320 Forever and a Day—all-star Mar. 19

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 West 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 326 Time to Kill—Nolan-Angel Jan. 22
 327 The Immortal Sergeant—Fonda-O'Hara . . . Jan. 29
 328 Chetniks—Dorn-Sten Feb. 5
 329 The Meanest Man in the World—Benny . . . Feb. 12
 330 Margin for Error—Berle-Bennett Feb. 19
 316 The Young Mr. Pitt—Donat Feb. 26

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- The Powers Girl—Shirley-Landis-Murphy . . . Jan. 15
 Calaboose—Rogers-Berry, Jr. (re.) Jan. 29
 Young and Willing—Holden-Hayward Feb. 5
 Fall In—Hal Roach (re.) Mar. 5

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 7015 Nightmare—Barrymore-Donlevy Nov. 13
 7028 Strictly in the Groove—MacDonald-Errol . . Nov. 20
 7029 Behind the Eight Ball—Ritz Bros.-Bruce . . Dec. 4
 7034 Madame Spy—Bennett-Porter Dec. 11
 7008 Pittsburgh—Dietrich-Wayne (re.) Dec. 11
 7032 The Great Impersonation—Bellamy-Ankers . . Dec. 18
 7063 Arabian Nights—Sabu-Montez-Hall Dec. 25
 7016 When Johnny Comes Marching Home—
 Jones-Frazee (re.) Jan. 1
 7037 Eyes of the Underworld—Dix-Barrie Jan. 8
 7065 Shadow of a Doubt—Wright-Cotten Jan. 15
 7027 Mug Town—Dead End Kids (re.) Jan. 22
 Tenting on the Old Camp Ground—Brown-
 Ritter (61 m.) Feb. 5
 Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon—
 Rathbone-Bruce Feb. 12

The Amazing Mrs. Holliday—Durbin-

- O'Brien Feb. 19
 Hi Buddy—Paige-Hilliard Feb. 26
 Hi 'Ya Chum—Ritz Bros. Mar. 5
 Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman—Chaney-
 Lugosi Mar. 12
 It Ain't Hay—Abbott & Costello Mar. 19
 He's My Guy—Davis-Foran Mar. 26

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 214 Casablanca—Bogart-Bergman-Henried . . . Jan. 23
 213 Truck Busters—Travis-Ford Feb. 6
 209 The Hard Way—Lupino-Leslie-Morgan . . . Feb. 20
 218 Mysterious Doctor—Loder-Parker Mar. 6
 217 Air Force—Garfield-Carey Mar. 20

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**Columbia—One Reel**

- 4655 Com. Sings No. 5 (9½ m.) Dec. 11
 4903 Our Second Front—Panaromics (10 m.) (re.) . Dec. 18
 4953 Shep Fields—Famous Bands (10 m.) Dec. 23
 4504 King Midas, Jr.—Col. Rhap. (7 m.) (re.) . . Dec. 25
 4855 Screen Snapshots No. 5 (10 m.) Dec. 25
 4704 Cholly Polly—Cartoon (6½ m.) (re.) . . . Dec. 31
 4961 Wings for the Fledgling—America Speaks
 (10 m.) Dec. 31
 4656 Com. Sings No. 6 (9½ m.) Jan. 1
 4804 Ladies Day in Sports—Sports (10 m.) . . . Jan. 22
 4962 Mr. Smug—America Speaks (10 m.) Jan. 28
 4856 Screen Snapshots No. 6 (10 m.) Jan. 29
 4505 Slay it with Flowers—Col. Rhap. (7 m.) . . Jan. 29
 4705 Vitamin G Man—Phantasies (7 m.) Feb. 5
 4971 Troop Train—OWI (free) Feb. 11
 4657 Com. Sings No. 7 (9 m.) Feb. 18
 4506 There's Something About a Soldier—
 Col. Rhap. (7 m.) Feb. 26
 4857 Screen Snapshots No. 7 (10 m.) Feb. 26
 4805 Diving Daredevils—Sports (10 m.) Feb. 26
 4972 Farmer in War—OWI (free) Mar. 4
 4706 Kindly Scram—Phantasies (9 m.) Mar. 6
 4973 Right of Way—OWI (free) Mar. 18
 4507 Professor Small and Mr. Tall—Col. Rhap.
 (7 m.) Mar. 26
 4658 Com. Sings No. 8 (10 m.) Mar. 26

Columbia—Two Reels

- 4141 Trouble in Canyon City—Valley of Vanishing
 Men No. 1 (20 m.) Dec. 17
 4142 The Mystery of Ghost Town—Valley of
 Vanishing Men No. 2 (20 m.) Dec. 24
 4410 The Great Glover—Gloveslinger (18½ m.) . Dec. 25
 4143 Danger Walks By Night—Valley of Vanishing
 Men No. 3 (20 m.) Dec. 31
 4403 They Stooze to Conga—Stooges (15½ m.) . . Jan. 1
 4144 Hillside Horror—Valley of Vanishing Men
 No. 4 (20 m.) Jan. 7
 4145 Guns in the Night—Valley of Vanishing Men
 No. 5 (20 m.) Jan. 14
 4427 His Wedding Scare—All Star (16½ m.) . . Jan. 15
 4146 The Bottomless Well—Valley of Vanishing
 Men No. 6 (20 m.) Jan. 21
 4428 A Blitz on the Fritz—All Star (18½ m.) . . Jan. 22
 4147 The Man in the Gold Mask—Valley of
 Vanishing Men No. 7 (20 m.) Jan. 28
 4404 Dizzy Detectives—Stooges (18½ m.) . . . Feb. 5
 4148 When the Devil Drives—Valley of Vanishing
 Men No. 8 (20 m.) Feb. 5
 4429 Wolf in Thief's Clothing—All Star (15 m.) . Feb. 12

- 4149 The Traitor's Shroud—Valley of Vanishing
Men No. 9 (20 m.).....Feb. 12
- 4411 Socks Appeal—Gloveslinger (16 m.)Feb. 19
- 4150 Death Strikes at Seven—Valley of Vanishing
Men No. 10 (20 m.)Feb. 19
- 4151 Satan in the Saddle—Valley of Vanishing
Men No. 11 (20 m.).....Feb. 26
- 4152 The Mine of Missing Men—Valley of Vanishing
Men No. 12 (20 m.).....Mar. 4
- 4430 Two Saplings—All Star (17 m.)Mar. 5
- 4153 Danger on Dome Rock—Valley of Vanishing
Men No. 13 (20 m.).....Mar. 11
- 4154 The Door That Has No Key—Valley of
Vanishing Men No. 14 (20 m.).....Mar. 18
- 4155 Empire's End—Valley of Vanishing Men
No. 15 (20 m.).....Mar. 25

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- T-413 Glimpses of Ontario—Traveltalks (9 m.)...Dec. 5
- M-431 The Last Lesson—Min. (11 m.).....Dec. 19
- S-462 Marines in the Making—Pete Smith (9 m.)...Dec. 26
- M-432 People of Russia—Min. (10 m.).....Dec. 26
- W-441 Barney Bear's Victory Garden—Cartoon
(8 m.)Dec. 26
- T-414 Land of Orizaba—Traveltalks (9 m.).....Jan. 2
- S-461 First Aid—Pete Smith (re.) (10 m.).....Jan. 2
- M-433 Brief Interval—Min. (11 m.).....Jan. 16
- W-442 Sufferin' Cats—Cartoon (8 m.).....Jan. 16
- M-434 Portrait of a Genius—Min. (11 m.).....Jan. 23
- T-415 Mighty Niagara—Traveltalks (10 m.).....Jan. 30
- C-492 Benjamin Franklin, Jr.—Our Gang (11 m.)...Jan. 30
- W-443 Bah Wilderness—Cartoon (7 m.).....Feb. 13
- T-416 Mexican Police on Parade—Travel. (9 m.)...Feb. 27

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-401 Keep 'Em Sailing—Special (20 m.).....Nov. 28

Paramount—One Reel

- T2-3 The Price of Victory—Victory Short
(13 m.) (re.)Dec. 3
- L2-2 Unusual Occupations No. 2 (10 m.).....Dec. 4
- A2-3 Hands of Women—Headliner (11 m.).....Dec. 11
- Y2-1 Speaking of Animals and Their Families
(8 m.).....Dec. 18
- W2-1 Superman in Destruction, Inc.—Superman
(8 m.)Dec. 25
- E2-3 Me Musical Nephews—Popeye (6 m.).....Dec. 25
- U2-2 Jasper and the Choo Choo—Mad. Mod.
(7 m.).....Jan. 1
- R2-3 Modern Biking—Sportlight (9 m.).....Jan. 8
- A2-4 Mitchell Ayres & Orch.—Headliner (9 m.)...Jan. 15
- E2-4 Spinach for Britain—Popeye (6 m.).....Jan. 22
- J2-3 Popular Science No. 3 (10 m.).....Feb. 5
- L2-3 Unusual Occupations No. 3 (10 m.).....Feb. 12
- R2-4 Trading Blows—Sportlight (10 m.).....Feb. 12
- E2-5 Seein' Red White 'n' Blue—Popeye (6½ m.)...Feb. 19
- W2-2 The Mummy Strikes—Superman (10 m.)...Feb. 19
- E2-6 To Weak to Work—Popeye (6 m.).....Feb. 26
- Y2-2 At the Bird Farm—Speaking of Animals
(9 m.)Feb. 26
- A2-5 Ina Ray Hutton & Orch.—Head. (10 m.)...Mar. 5
- U2-3 Bravo Mr. Strauss—Mad. Mod. (7½ m.)...Mar. 12
- R2-5 Hike or Bike—Sportlight (10 m.).....Mar. 19
- T2-4 The Aldrich Family Gets Into Scrap—
Victory Short (10 m.) (re.)Mar. 25
- W2-3 Jungle Drums—Superman (10 m.)Mar. 26

RKO—One Reel

- 24115 How to Fish—Disney (7 m.).....Dec. 4
- 24116 Bellboy Donald—Disney (7 m.).....Dec. 18
- 24117 Der Fuehrer's Face—Disney (8 m.).....Jan. 1
- 24118 Education For Death—Disney (10 m.).....Jan. 15

1942-43 Season

- 34405 Enric Madriguera & Orch.—Jamborees
(8 m.)Dec. 25
- 34305 Basketeers—Sportsopes (9 m.).....Jan. 15
- 34306 Ski Trails—Sportsopes (8 m.).....Jan. 29

RKO—Two Reels

- 33703 Pretty Dolly—Leon Errol (17 m.).....Dec. 11
- 33403 Duck Soup—Edgar Kennedy (17 m.).....Dec. 18
- 34201 Conquer By the Clock—Victory Special
(11 m.)Dec. 18
- 33103 Army Chaplain—This Is America (19 m.)...Dec. 18

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 3557 Frankenstein's Cat—Terry-Toon (7 m.)...Nov. 27
- 3901 Monkey Doodle Dandies—Lew Lehr (9 m.)
(re.)Dec. 11
- 3558 Barnyard WAAC—Terry-Toon (7 m.) (re.)...Dec. 18
- 3302 When Winter Calls—Sports (9 m. (re.)....Dec. 25
- 3567 Somewhere in the Pacific—T.T. (9 m.) (re.)...Jan. 8
- 3158 Strange Empire—Magic Carpet (8 m.) (re.)...Jan. 15
- 3559 Scrap for Victory—Terry-Toon (7 m.) (re.)...Jan. 22
- 3568 He Dood It Again—Terry-Toon (7 m.) (re.)...Feb. 5
- 3303 Steel-head Fighters—Sports (9 m) (re.)....Feb. 12
- 3155 Gay Rio—Magic Carpet (9 m.).....Feb. 19
- 3560 Barnyard Blackout—Terry-Toon (7 m.)...Mar. 5
- 3304 Back To Bikes—Sports (9 m.).....Mar. 12
- 3561 Shipyard Symphony—Terry-Toon (9 m.)...Mar. 19
- 3157 Land Where Time Stood Still—Magic Carpet
(9 m.)Apr. 2
- 3562 Patriotic Pooches—Terry-Toon (7 m.).....Apr. 9
- 3202 Climbing the Peaks—Hugh James (9m) (re.)...Apr. 16
- 3401 W.A.V.E.S.—World Today (10 m.).....Apr. 30

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

- 3801 It's Everybody's War—America Speaks
(15 m.)Nov. 6
- Vol. 9 No. 3 Mr. and Mrs. America—March of Time
(20 m.)Nov. 6
- Vol. 9 No. 4 Africa—Prelude to Victory—March of
Time (20 m.)Dec. 4
- Vol. 9 No. 5 The Navy and the Nation—March of
Time (20 m.)Jan. 1
- Vol. 9 No. 6 A Day of War—Russia—March of
Time (20 m.)Jan. 29

Universal—One Reel

- 7356 Winter Sports Jamboree—Var. Views (9 m.)...Jan. 18
- 7376 Let Huey Do It—Per. Odd. (9 m.).....Jan. 25
- 7357 Mother of Presidents—Var. Views (10 m.)...Feb. 1
- 7377 She's A-1 in the Navy—Per. Odd.....Feb. 8
- 7244 The Screwball—Lantz Cartune (7 m.).....Feb. 15
- 0996 Arsenal of Might—Victory Featurette
(10 m.)Feb. 22
- 7358 Hungry India—Var. ViewsMar. 1
- 7378 Little Clayton Farmfront Wonder—
Per. Odd.Mar. 8
- 7234 Egg Cracker Suite—Swing Symphony.....Mar. 22

Universal—Two Reels

7583	Attacked By Bombers—Smilin' Jack No. 3	
	(20 m.)	Jan. 19
7584	Knives of Vengeance—Smilin' Jack No. 4	
	(20 m.)	Jan. 26
7585	A Watery Grave—Smilin' Jack No. 5 (21m)	Feb. 2
7586	Escape By Clipper—Smilin' Jack No. 6	
	(20 m.)	Feb. 9
7126	Hit Tune Jamboree—Musical (15 m.)	Feb. 10
7587	Fifteen Fathoms Below—Smilin' Jack No. 7	
	(19 m.)	Feb. 16
7588	Treachery at Sea—Smilin' Jack No. 8	
	(19 m.)	Feb. 23
7589	The Bridge of Peril—Smilin' Jack No. 9	
	(21 m.)	Mar. 2
7127	Swing Time Blues—Musical (15 m.)	Mar. 3
7590	Blackout in the Islands—Smilin' Jack No. 10	
	(21 m.)	Mar. 9
7591	Held For Treason—Smilin' Jack No. 11	
	(20 m.)	Mar. 16
7592	The Torture Fire Test—Smilin' Jack No. 12	
	(21 m.)	Mar. 23

Vitaphone—One Reel

8404	Cuba, Land of Adventure and Sport—Sports	
	(10 m.)	Jan. 9
8707	Coal Black & De Sebben Dwarfs—Mer. Mel.	
	(7 m.) (re.)	Jan. 16
8505	U. S. Navy Band—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)	Jan. 16
8604	Confusions of a Nutzy Spy—Looney Tune	
	(7 m.) (re.)	Jan. 23
8305	This is Your Enemy—Novel. (10 m.)	Jan. 23
8306	King of the Archers—Novel. (10 m.)	Feb. 6
8708	Pigs in a Polka—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.)	Feb. 6
8709	Tortoise Wins By a Hare—Mer. Mel.	
	(7 m.) (re.)	Feb. 20
8408	Women in Sports—Sports (10 m.)	Feb. 20
8710	Fifth Column Mouse—Mer. Mel. (7m.) (re.)	Mar. 6
8605	To Duck Or Not To Duck—Looney Tune	
	(7 m.) (re.)	Mar. 6
8407	Sporting Dogs—Sports (10 m.) (re.)	Mar. 20
8711	Flop Goes the Weasel—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)	Mar. 20
8606	Hop and Go—Looney Tune (7 m.) (re.)	Mar. 27
8506	Ozzie Nelson & Orch.—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)	Mar. 27
8303	Stars on Horseback—Novel. (10 m.)	Apr. 3
8712	Super Rabbit—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)	Apr. 3
8713	The Unbearable Bear—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)	Apr. 17
8607	Wise Quacking Duck—Looney Tune (7 m.)	Apr. 17

Vitaphone—Two Reels

8002	The Fighting Engineers—Special (20 m.)	
	(re.)	Jan. 2
8107	Little Isles of Freedom—B'way Brev. (20 m.)	
	(re.)	Jan. 30
8108	Our American Frontier—B'way Brev. (20 m.)	
	(re.)	Feb. 13
8109	Army Show—B'way Brev. (20 m.)	Feb. 22
8003	Young and Beautiful—Special (20 m.) (re.)	Mar. 13
8110	Rear Gunner—B'way Brev. (20 m.)	Apr. 10
8004	Eagles of the Navy—B'way Brev. (20 m.)	Apr. 24

NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK**RELEASE DATES****Pathe News**

35248	Wed. (E.)	Feb. 10
35149	Sat. (O.)	Feb. 13
35250	Wed. (E.)	Feb. 17
35151	Sat. (O.)	Feb. 20
35252	Wed. (E.)	Feb. 24
35153	Sat. (O.)	Feb. 27
35254	Wed. (E.)	Mar. 3
35155	Sat. (O.)	Mar. 6
35256	Wed. (E.)	Mar. 10
35157	Sat. (O.)	Mar. 13
35258	Wed. (E.)	Mar. 17
35159	Sat. (O.)	Mar. 20
35260	Wed. (E.)	Mar. 24
35161	Sat. (O.)	Mar. 27
35262	Wed. (E.)	Mar. 31

Metrotone News

243	Tuesday	Feb. 9
244	Thursday	Feb. 11
245	Tuesday	Feb. 16
246	Thursday	Feb. 18
247	Tuesday	Feb. 23
248	Thursday	Feb. 25
249	Tuesday	Mar. 2
250	Thursday	Mar. 4
251	Tuesday	Mar. 9
252	Thursday	Mar. 11
253	Tuesday	Mar. 16
254	Thursday	Mar. 18
255	Tuesday	Mar. 23
256	Thursday	Mar. 25
257	Tuesday	Mar. 30
258	Thursday	Apr. 1

Universal

161	Wednesday	Feb. 10
162	Friday	Feb. 12
163	Wednesday	Feb. 17
164	Friday	Feb. 19
165	Wednesday	Feb. 24
166	Friday	Feb. 26
167	Wednesday	Mar. 3
168	Friday	Mar. 5
169	Wednesday	Mar. 10
170	Friday	Mar. 12
171	Wednesday	Mar. 17
172	Friday	Mar. 19
173	Wednesday	Mar. 24
174	Friday	Mar. 26
175	Wednesday	Mar. 31
176	Friday	Apr. 2

Paramount News

48	Wednesday	Feb. 10
49	Saturday	Feb. 13
50	Wednesday	Feb. 17
51	Saturday	Feb. 20
52	Wednesday	Feb. 24
53	Saturday	Feb. 27
54	Wednesday	Mar. 3
55	Saturday	Mar. 6
56	Wednesday	Mar. 10
57	Saturday	Mar. 13
58	Wednesday	Mar. 17
59	Saturday	Mar. 20
60	Wednesday	Mar. 24
61	Saturday	Mar. 27
62	Wednesday	Mar. 31

Fox Movietone

44	Saturday	Feb. 6
45	Wednesday	Feb. 10
46	Saturday	Feb. 13
47	Wednesday	Feb. 17
48	Saturday	Feb. 20
49	Wednesday	Feb. 24
50	Saturday	Feb. 27
51	Wednesday	Mar. 3
52	Saturday	Mar. 6
53	Wednesday	Mar. 10
54	Saturday	Mar. 13
55	Wednesday	Mar. 17
56	Saturday	Mar. 20
57	Wednesday	Mar. 24
58	Saturday	Mar. 27
59	Wednesday	Mar. 31

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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UNWISE TACTICS

One of our industry's unethical practices has been that certain producers often ride the coat tail of the exploitation campaign on some meritorious picture by resurrecting an old picture either with the same title, or the same star, or a similar theme.

What is more deplorable is the fact that there are always enough exhibitors who become parties to the evil by showing the resurrected picture, thus doing harm, not only to their competitors, but also to themselves, for the majority of the public, led to believe that the resurrected picture is the same picture as that which is being exploited widely, go to see it. The result is that they are disappointed, particularly in the case where a star is concerned: at the time that he (or she) had appeared in the old picture, he may have had no name, and no experience, and his performance was mediocre. In such cases, the public feels cheated.

The practice is resorted to also when Academy Award winners are named: those exhibitors who do not deal with the company that had been given the award, book pictures which, either present the award players, or was directed by the same director. The public, not knowing the difference, surmises that the resurrected picture is as good as that which had won the award, either for the star, the bit player, the author, or the director.

To level this criticism against the exhibitor alone, however, is unfair—no exhibitor could present to the public a picture of this kind unless, either the producer of it, or the distributor became a party to the sharp practice by furnishing him with the old picture, thus splitting the "booty."

Another example of "cashing in" on the exploitation campaign of a meritorious picture took place recently in New York City, where an exploitation house, just off Broadway, exhibited PRC's "They Raid By Night," a low-budget picture, which deals with the adventures of a British Commando in Norway. A few blocks distant, in a first run theatre on Broadway, Columbia's "Commandos Strike at Dawn" was playing. Obviously taking advantage of the extensive exploitation campaign given to the Columbia picture, the exploitation house, in huge letters, many times the size of the picture's title letters, billed the PRC picture in this fashion: **THE COMMANDOS** "They Raid By Night." Unless one scrutinized the advertisement and noticed the picture's title, one remained with the impression that "THE COMMANDOS" was the title of the picture, and, because of the billing's similarity to the "Commandos Strike at Dawn," many persons probably believed it to be the Columbia picture. Their dissatisfaction will not do the industry any good.

Then there is the unwise practice of labeling a picture with a title that would indicate what the picture

is about, but which actually has nothing to do with the picture. If it has, the connection is far-fetched. A perfect example of this practice is the Warner Bros. production, "The Gorilla Man," which is a highly incredible tale of a group of Nazi spies, operating in England, who attempt to discredit a British Army captain; he had verbal information regarding Nazi invasion plans, and they wanted his superiors to question the truth of his statements. The closest that one can connect the title to the story, if it is a connection, is that one of the spies strangles a few persons. There is nothing about this spy that depicts him as being other than a normal person insofar as his features are concerned. As a matter of fact, not even as much as an organ grinder's monkey appears throughout the action. Yet the RKO Theatre Circuit, which exhibited this picture recently, exploited it through advertisements that contained a fierce-looking, monstrous ape. It is bad enough that Warners gave the picture a misleading title, it is even worse that the RKO Circuit chose to exploit it in that manner. Many a horror-picture fan, who was enticed by the advertisement, must have felt that he had been cheated.

Still another example of unwise tactics is the one reported in the February 18 issue of *Daily Variety*. This paper reports that Paramount is planning to rush pre-release dates on its production, "Aerial Gunner," which was within about two weeks of final assembly from the date on which this news was reported in that paper, so that "Aerial Gunner" may be exhibited in certain territories ahead of Warner Bros.' "Air Force," which deals with the adventures of a Flying Fortress bomber, and with aerial gunnery.

HARRISON'S REPORTS is of the opinion that a company of the magnitude of Paramount should not deliberately stoop so low as to "cash in" on the exploitation that Warners is giving to "Air Force." Paramount probably feels that it is to their best interests to have "Aerial Gunner" reach first as many territories as possible, so that the public would not judge the picture as an imitation of "Air Force." Moreover, Paramount probably realizes that, as compared with "Air Force," their picture is in effect a "quickie." It will, therefore, suffer by comparison if shown second.

If, on the other hand, Paramount has decided to start a dirty race with Warners, so as to beat the release dates of "Air Force," its decision can act only as a challenge to Warners to speed up its own release dates, with the result that the exhibitors will be fighting one another, in each territory, with pictures founded on a similar subject.

Why should Paramount bring about a competitive condition with the Warner picture, instead of carefully preparing an exploitation campaign for its own
(Continued on last page),

"The McGuerins from Brooklyn" with William Bendix and Grace Bradley
(United Artists, December 31; time, 45 min.)

As compared with most of the Hal Roach streamlined comedies, this one is by far a better entertainment; most audiences will find it to be adequately funny, despite the many familiar situations. The picture is a sequel to "Brooklyn Orchid," with William Bendix and Joe Sawyer recreating their roles of co-owners of a taxicab company. As in that picture, the comedy, most of which is of the slapstick variety, is brought about by the marital difficulties of Bendix, whose wife misinterprets his relationship with his glamorous secretary. William Bendix's current popularity may help at the box-office:—

Grace Bradley wanders into the office of the Red Circle Cab Company where she finds William Bendix, her husband, teaching Marjorie Woodworth, his secretary, a trick shot on a billiard table. Grace misinterprets the situation, and leaves in a huff. To square himself, Bendix persuades Joe Sawyer, his partner, to take Marjorie to a cabaret; Bendix plans to bring Grace there to convince her that Marjorie is Sawyer's girl-friend. In order to help Bendix, Sawyer is compelled to break a date with Arline Judge, with whom he was involved. Bendix returns home to find Grace in the midst of her "body conditioning" treatment, under the tutelage of Max Baer. He informs Grace that, if she will go with him to the cabaret, she will see for herself that Marjorie is Sawyer's girl-friend. Baer, however, forbids Grace to go out. Marjorie and Sawyer arrive at the cabaret, but instead of Bendix they meet Arline, who creates a scene. Sawyer frantically telephones Bendix, who arrives at the cabaret just as the place is raided. Bendix is photographed with Lucy in his arms, helping her out of a window. As a result, Grace leaves him, and rushes off to Baer's health resort. Taking Marjorie and Sawyer with him, Bendix follows Grace. When his attempts to appease Grace are unsuccessful, Bendix arranges with Baer to stage a fake fight, which Baer would lose; he hoped to impress Grace and win her back. The trick works until Grace inadvertently discovers the ruse. All turns out well when Marjorie and Sawyer announce their wedding plans.

Earle Snell and Clarence Marks wrote the screen play, Fred Guiol produced it, and Kurt Neumann directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Calaboose" with Jimmy Rogers, Noah Beery, Jr., and Mary Brian
(United Artists, January 29, time, 45 min.)

This is another of the Hal Roach streamlined comedies dealing with the adventures of Jimmy Rogers and Noah Beery, Jr., as two youthful cow-hands. Although this picture has more action than "Dudes Are Pretty People," the first picture in which these two appeared, it is on about the same entertainment level—tiresome. Once again the action revolves around Beery's weakness for a pretty girl, and Rogers' efforts to stop him from falling in love. It is a hodge-podge of silly and trite situations that may prove amusing to children; adult audiences, however, will be considerably bored with it:—

Jimmy Rogers and Noah Beery, Jr., arrive in the small town of Lanning where Bill Henry gives them a job loading horses on freight cars. Beery becomes smitten with Mary Brian, the Sheriff's niece, who spends most of her time trying to reform criminals. Beery deliberately gets himself jailed and, by speaking to Mary of his criminal tendencies, he gets her to spend considerable time with him to bring about his reform. Rogers vows to rescue his pal from jail and from Mary. At a saloon, he recognizes Marc Lawrence, a notorious criminal. Realizing that, if Lawrence were in jail, Mary would shift her attentions to him, Rogers picks an argument with the criminal and manages to get him arrested. Mary switches her attention to Lawrence, and obligingly telephones his "mother" to inform her of Lawrence's situation. Unknown to Mary, she had been speaking to Lawrence's "moll." Meanwhile Rogers grows morose over the fate of his pal, and decides on a plan to get him out of jail. Rogers reaches the jail just as Lawrence's mob arrive to free their leader. The gangsters flee the jail and take Beery with them, leaving Rogers and the Sheriff locked up in a cell. They finally extricate themselves and start after the gang in a chase that ends up with Lawrence and his gang in chains. When Beery learns that Mary is engaged to Henry, the man who employed him, he and Rogers leave town to continue their adventures.

Arnold Belgard wrote the screen play, Glenn Tryon produced it, and Hal Roach, Jr., directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Mysterious Doctor" with John Loder and Eleanor Parker

(Warner Bros., March 6; time, 57 min.)

A mild murder mystery melodrama, with a touch of horror thrown in for good measure; it should find its best reception in small-town and neighborhood theatres as the lower half of a mid-week double bill. The identity of the murderer does not come as a surprise, since one suspects from the beginning that he is guilty; yet the plot is logically worked out, and for this reason it holds one's attention fairly well. While the action is not lacking in suspense, it does lack originality of treatment. Not much can be said for the dialogue. The background, that of a drab English mining village, lends itself well to the eerie atmosphere. The comedy relief is negligible, and the romantic interest incidental:—

On a walking tour of England, Dr. Lester Matthews goes to Morgan Head, a lonely mining village, which got its name from a headless ghost. Stopping at the village inn, Matthews hears the legend of the headless ghost from Forrester Harvey, the village drunkard; Sir John Loder, the country squire; and Frank Mayo, the innkeeper, who always wore a black hood over his disfigured face. Many persons claimed to have seen the headless ghost, and they believed that it lived in the mine. For this reason the villagers refused to work the mine. The only person ever to enter the mine and return was Matt Willis, the village idiot. Matthews decides to visit the mine. Eleanor Parker, Mayo's niece, tells Willis to follow Matthews and see that nothing happens to him. Mayo also trails Matthews. Matthews does not return, and on the following day a headless body is found by Lieutenant Bruce

Lester, Eleanor's fiance, and Loder. Willis is arrested as the "ghost" and murderer who had terrorized the village. Willis escapes, and takes Eleanor to the mine, to a secret stairway that leads into the living room of Loder's castle. Lester, searching the castle, finds Eleanor and Willis. They are interrupted by the entrance of Loder, gun in hand, who boasts to Lester that it is he who had kept the English from working the mine, and that he is a direct descendant of German nobility. After wounding Willis, Loder forces Lester and Eleanor into a powder room, and prepares to set off a charge. A man who appears to be Mayo, for he is wearing the innkeeper's hood, enters the mine and captures Loder. During their struggle the hood is pulled from the man's head and he is revealed as Matthews. Lester explains to Eleanor that Willis is the rightful heir of Loder's castle, and that Matthews had been posing as her uncle after Loder had murdered the innkeeper.

Richard Weil wrote the screen play, and Ben Stoll-off directed it.

Too horrifying for children.

**"Power of the Press" with Lee Tracy,
Guy Kibbee and Otto Kruger**
(Columbia, Jan. 28; time, 63 min.)

Because of its timely and interesting subject, this newspaper melodrama rises above the level of average program fare. The story revolves around a fascist-minded newspaper manager, who seeks to create disunity by influencing the paper's readers with his destructive criticism of the government. The picture's message is that freedom of the press means freedom to tell the truth, not to twist the truth. There are a few draggy spots, but on the whole the pace is fairly fast, holding one's interest to a fair degree. The performances are generally good. Guy Kibbee is believable as the small-town publisher who cleans up a big-city newspaper. Lee Tracy plays a familiar role as a fast-talking managing editor. There is no romantic interest:—

When Guy Kibbee, his old friend and small-town newspaper publisher, accuses him of printing treasonable propaganda, Minor Watson, publisher of the New York Gazette, decides to change the policy of his paper. But before Watson can return to honest journalism, Otto Kruger, minority owner and active head of the paper, has him shot. Before Watson dies, he wills his controlling interest in the paper to Kibbee, with a request that he clean up the paper. Kibbee is reluctant to take on such a big job, but Gloria Dickson, Watson's secretary, persuades him to give it a trial. Meanwhile Kruger, with the help of Victor Jory, his ruthless aide, pins the murder on Larry Parks, a former Gazette employee. Lee Tracy, the managing editor, unwittingly helps Kruger with his scheme. When Kibbee takes over the affairs of the paper, he investigates Parks' case, and believes that the man is innocent; he asks his readers to submit any information that will help to clear him. Jory and Kruger intercept and murder a newsdealer, who brings proof of Parks' innocence. Continuing his rabble-rousing tactics, Kruger dupes Tracy into printing a story, which accuses a government official of hoarding, for his personal use, rationed items. This news incites the public, which riots and burns a warehouse containing valu-

able military supplies. Convinced that Kruger was behind a movement to undermine the government, Tracy unites with Gloria and Kibbee, and the trio sets out to prove his guilt. Using Kruger's tactics of fake news pictures and stories, Tracy manages to wring a confession from Kruger. Parks is released from jail.

Robert D. Andrews wrote the screen play, Leon Barsha produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"My Son, The Hero" with Patsy Kelly,
Roscoe Karns and Maxie Rosenbloom**
(Producers Releasing Corp., Apr. 5; time, 67 min.)

A mediocre program comedy. Everyone in the cast tries to make something of his or her role, but they are hampered by a story that creaks with age, and by dialogue that is trite; the general effect is boredom. The story, which is done in the "Lady for a Day" manner, revolves around a broken-down fight promoter, who puts up a false front in order to impress his son; the lad believed him to be a successful business man. The idea of the theme is comical, but the treatment lacks originality, and the situations are forced. Instead of comedy, it is just plain silliness:—

In his letters to Joan Blair, his ex-wife, and Joseph Allen, Jr., his son, Roscoe Karns had led them to believe that he was wealthy, and remarried to a beautiful woman, who had a daughter. Actually Karns was having a difficult time supporting himself out of the earnings of Maxie Rosenbloom, a mediocre fighter. Karns' troubles increase when he learns that Allen, a heroic flyer, had been granted a furlough and planned to visit him. Patsy Kelly, Rosenbloom's ex-wife, comes to Karns' rescue. She takes over temporarily the mansion of a friend, agrees to pose as Karns' "wife," and arranges with Lois Collier to pose as her "daughter." Rosenbloom and Luis Alberni, his pal, act as the domestic help. When Allen arrives he is impressed with his father, and is attracted to Lois, who returns his admiration. Patsy learns that Allen's mother is in town, and graciously invites her to the mansion. Both become quite chummy, and they plan a costume ball to help Allen in a bond selling drive. The romance between Lois and Allen is threatened when Carol Hughes, daughter of the mansion's owner, returns home and sets her cap for Allen. In appreciation of his heroic deeds, Allen is given fifty thousand dollars by a rich dowager. He turns this money over to Karns for safe-keeping. Karns "borrows" two thousand dollars, and instructs Rosenbloom to bet it on a horse named, "My Son." Karns is crestfallen when he learns that the horse lost the race. Moreover, he had pledged himself to buy a twenty-five thousand dollar bond, and he feared that his son will learn the truth about him. Joan, Karns' ex-wife, suspects the worst, and she coaxes him into revealing that Patsy was not his wife and that he had lost the money. All turns out well when Rosenbloom returns with his pockets filled with money; he had bet on the wrong horse, and it had won the race. Joan and Karns decide to remarry, and Allen forgives Karns for his deception.

Doris Malloy and Edgar G. Ulmer wrote the screen play, Peter R. Van Duinen produced it, and Mr. Ulmer directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

picture at a later date? If Paramount has a fine picture in "Aerial Gunner," it should be content to let the picture earn its rightful place at the box-office, and not let it be made the means of unfair competition, which, in these lush box-office days, or, for that matter, even normal box-office days, is quite unnecessary; no one—exhibitors, Paramount, or Warners—would get the utmost out of the pictures.

Warners' "Air Force" is a great picture, and it is worthy of a carefully planned campaign, intended to benefit its exhibitor-customers. Its premature exhibition as a result of the Paramount action, therefore, will harm the Warner Bros.' accounts—it cannot help doing otherwise.

If Paramount considers its picture similar in theme to Warners' picture, then fair play demands that Paramount postpone the release of its picture for a reasonable length of time so that the two pictures may not conflict.

GREAT TITLES AND SMALL PRODUCERS

Some persons connected with the major producing-distributing companies are irked because the small independent producers conceive box-office titles of great merit, on subjects of current interest; they feel that these great titles are wasted on small-budget pictures, whereas, if they were attached to pictures that cost anywhere from one-half million dollars up, they would bring in far greater returns.

While at first hand it does seem a pity that great titles should be given to small-budget pictures, what right has any one to criticize the inventors of such titles just because they are small producers? After all, these critics should remember that the large companies with whom they are associated had very small beginnings, and through their development this business has become one of the greatest industries in the world.

Warner Bros., Metro, Fox (now 20th Century-Fox), Universal, Columbia, RKO (formerly FBO, and still formerly Robertson-Cole), and even Paramount, for example, started from scratch. Who can tell that the small companies of today will not be the big companies of tomorrow?

Look at Republic—the progress this company has made in the last two or three years is preparing it for a great career—as big, perhaps, as the career of any of the big major companies. Look at Universal—today there isn't much distance it has to travel before it will be classed as one of the biggest companies in the business. Look at Columbia—ten years ago it left the "quickie" class to enter the major classification, and today it is a competitor the majors have to reckon with. Look at Monogram—it has stepped into the \$250,000 picture class, and from now on watch its smoke. Even Producers Releasing Corporation shows great promise—dollar for dollar it is getting more value than its big brothers.

If the small producers have the initiative to select great titles for their pictures, they are to be encouraged and not condemned. The best sort of encouragement they can get is more playdates from the affiliated circuits. Given that, just watch them measure up to their opportunities.

There is within the ranks of the small producers a wealth of good showmanship, which constantly threatens to compete with the majors. Such a threat is healthy for our business, for it keeps the majors on their toes.

VERONICA LAKE AND WAR PRODUCTION

Additional proof that there is no end to the sacrifices our industry will make for the war effort is Veronica Lake's acquiescence to the request of the War Production Board that she change her "peek-a-boo" coiffure. It seems that too many of the nation's women workers in war plants imitated Veronica's hair-do, and it came to a point where it constituted an occupational hazard, because of the danger of dangling hair getting caught in the machinery.

Perhaps the best comment on the situation was made by a wag, who suggested that Monty Woolley tuck his beard into his shirt.

TOEING THE LINE

Writing the February 21 issue of the *New York Times*, Mr. Fred Stanley, Hollywood correspondent of that paper, reports the following:

"Many of the so-called quickie producers, who specialize in action films, have been able for years to confine themselves to a few types of plots which fall into the general category of Western, gangster, or 'cops-and-robbers' pictures.

"These subjects are now getting the critical eye of officialdom, for unless a picture presents a truthful reflection of American life it is in danger of being banned from overseas showing by the Office of Censorship regulations on export films, the only official censorship to which Hollywood pictures are subject. Last week a group of the independents appointed their own committee to work close to the OWI office here for future guidance in making subjects that will be assured of playing theatres outside the country, for foreign revenue often represents the difference between profit and loss.

"Types of pictures, and subjects within films, which cannot get official approval for export fall into these classifications:

"Gangster and other action films which do not reflect true American life and conditions or that might give the impression to foreigners that the United States is not a nation of law-abiding people; scenes showing racial discrimination; pictures portraying Americans living off the fat of the land, amid lavish surroundings and unconscious of their obligations to their fellow-men; films which paint Americans as supermen, winning battles single-handedly or assuming a general air of nationalistic superiority; pictures treating with imperialistic desires on the part of any of the United Nations, and pictures that would discredit the war efforts of any of these Allies. . . ."

Pictures that distort life in the United States, or the derogatory pictorialization or presentation of nationals of friendly countries has long been one of the greatest failings of our industry, and a subject that this writer has often touched upon. Apparently, it took a war, and the strict government censorship that naturally followed, to make the offending producers toe the line.

Past performances of some producers show that they refuse to recognize the harm that is done to cordial relations between other countries and our own, if it interferes with their personal creative ideas. Let us hope that, after the war, the producers will have learned a lesson from their cooperation on these matters with the government and will continue imposing on themselves self-censorship guided by this spirit.

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Beware of an Artificial Product Shortage

Business in metropolitan areas is so good that, pictures, which under normal conditions would rate no more than a one or two week run, are now being held for a third and fourth week. As a matter of fact, it has now reached a point where it is not considered unusual to count extended runs by months.

Take, for example, the record business done at the Radio City Music Hall by MGM's "Mrs. Miniver," which ran ten weeks, and "Random Harvest," which has just completed a record breaking run of eleven weeks. According to the Music Hall's management, both films were seen by no less than three million persons, who paid admissions of more than two million dollars for the privilege. MGM is reported to have received well over six hundred thousand dollars as its share of the grosses. From this theatre alone, MGM has recovered a large portion of the production costs of both films.

Other examples of long runs and huge grosses in the Broadway area are: Warner Brothers' "Yankee Doodle Dandy," which, after completing a twenty week run at the Hollywood on a two-a-day basis, returned to Broadway some months later for an additional six weeks run at the Strand, this time on continuous showings; Samuel Goldwyn's "Pride of the Yankees," which ran fourteen weeks at the Astor; Paramount's "Road to Morocco," which ran seven weeks at the Paramount, and was followed by "Star Spangled Rhythm," which ran for eight weeks; Noel Coward's "In Which We Serve," which ran eight weeks at the Capitol; Warner Brothers' "Casablanca," which, after a ten week run at the Hollywood, moved over to the Strand where it is now in its fourth week; Paramount's "Lucky Jordan," a program picture, which, played singly, ran for six weeks at the Rialto, becoming the first film to do so in the annals of that house—all these features are but a partial list of the films that have enjoyed unusual extended runs on Broadway in recent months. The business that they have done in this area has been matched in other areas throughout the country.

The thriving business done by the first run houses on extended runs is not due so much to the better quality of the pictures, as it is to the fact that war-time conditions have created an entertainment-hungry public, whose spending money is plentiful. But most of this lush business is concentrated in the key centers, and in areas where the business of war has increased the population many fold. Small-town and neighborhood exhibitors have experienced little, if any, improvement in their business. Yet the distributors will point to the extended runs and huge grosses in the aforementioned areas, and use that as a basis for the extortion of high film rentals and percentages.

The large number of holdovers has created a "picture shortage" for the subsequent run exhibitor; the major distributors have accumulated a huge backlog of product, which they are reluctant to release so long as these holdovers continue.

First run houses, which in normal times required about twenty-five to fifty features to take care of their yearly

needs, now find that fifteen to twenty-five features are more than enough for them.

The subsequent run exhibitor, however, has not experienced a like change in his product requirements; either the extended playing time in the first run houses has milked his district of the extra attendance he might have enjoyed, or his limited patronage cannot support a feature for more than three or four days, in which case he must have a change of program twice a week in order to operate his theatre full time. In other situations, similar conditions may require a triple change of program each week.

A subsequent run exhibitor, operating on a double feature policy, with a bi-weekly change of program, would require two hundred and eight features to keep his theatre in operation throughout the year. While the number of features produced this year are fewer than last year, there is, nevertheless, more than enough product to take care of his needs. The problem is not a matter of an actual picture shortage; it is a matter of availability.

As pointed out in the February 22 issue of Film Bulletin: "The outlook for a tight film situation in coming months is increased by the practice of hoarding films, being indulged by certain of the majors. Anticipating an acute product shortage in the near future, these companies, of which Paramount is the chief offender, seem to be operating on the theory that they will control the market and extract exorbitant terms from exhibitors when the situation arises. It is logical to make provision for spreading all available product over the maximum period of time, but the policy is being carried to excess in some quarters and the result may bring unforeseen reactions against those studios.

"An artificial product shortage might be used by some film moguls as the excuse to launch another drive to bring about governmental ban on double features."

Stating that there "will be a greater need for more product if the majors persist in their policy of hoarding pictures for the future," Film Bulletin observes: "Exhibitors who never before booked independent features may be compelled to turn to them as a last resort to keep their theatres open the full week."

One method by which the exhibitors can do much to combat the major distributors who hoard product so as to exact higher rentals, is to grant more play-dates to the smaller producers, thus encouraging them to better the standard of their product. The adoption of such a policy on the part of the exhibitors will serve to build up these small producers to a point where the majors will recognize in them a definite competitive threat, powerful enough to compel them to change their ways. Moreover, such a policy will make for keener competition between the distributors and, ultimately, the exhibitor will benefit.

As said in last week's issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS: "There is within the ranks of the small producers a wealth of good showmanship, which constantly threatens to compete with the majors. Such a threat is healthy for our business, for it keeps the majors on their toes."

"Frankenstein Meets Wolf Man" with Lon Chaney, Bela Lugosi, Patric Knowles and Ilona Massey

(Universal, March 12; time, 72 min.)

For those devotees who like their horror pictures strong, this one will fill the bill. To make the picture's spine-chilling effect twice as potent, Universal has disinterred its two prize monsters—"Wolf Man" and "Frankenstein's Monster." Throughout the action these two playmates go about committing murders and scaring people out of their wits until both take on a decided dislike for each other. This starts a "Battle of the Century," which comes to an end only after an outraged citizen blows up a dam, and both monsters are caught in the flood waters. Whether or not this spells finis for them is something the future and Universal knows best. The action and the eerie atmosphere conforms to a familiar pattern, but it does not detract from the film's horrendous nature:—

When ghouls attempt to rob his coffin, Lon Chaney comes to life and murders one of the robbers. Toward morning, Chaney is found injured, lying in the street. He is taken to a hospital where, after he regains consciousness, he reveals to Dr. Patric Knowles and Police Inspector Dennis Hoey that he is a "wolf man." He pleads with them to help rid him of his curse. They judge him insane, and have him placed in a straightjacket. Chaney escapes. Seeking permanent death, he goes to Europe to find Marie Ouspenskaya, a gypsy, hoping that she may help him. The gypsy believes that "Dr. Frankenstein's" diary holds the key to Chaney's fate, and she takes him to Vessaria. On the way to the "Frankenstein" castle ruins, Chaney changes into a "wolf man." He leaves the gypsy and dashes into the ruins. There he finds "Frankenstein's" Monster (Bela Lugosi) encased in ice. He releases the Monster and makes friends with him. Both seek the diary, but fail to find it. Chaney, who had regained his normal appearance, returns to Vessaria and, posing as a man interested in buying the castle, arranges with Mayor Lionel Atwill to meet Ilona Massey, "Frankenstein's" daughter; Chaney hoped to locate the diary through her. That night, Chaney and Ilona are guests of the mayor at a village festival. Knowles, who had traced Chaney, joins them. In the midst of the gaiety, the Monster appears, causing the villagers to riot. Chaney helps the Monster to escape. Knowles stops the villagers from storming the castle by promising to destroy both Chaney and the Monster through scientific means. Ilona accompanies Knowles to the castle, and turns over to him the diary containing the secret of eternal death. But instead of destroying Chaney and the Monster, Knowles decides to continue "Frankenstein's" experiments. As a result, the Monster regains his powers, and Chaney again turns into a "wolf man." Both beasts come to grips. Ilona and Knowles escape from the castle, which is destroyed when the flood waters of a dynamited dam are unloosed. Both beasts drown.

Curtis Siodmak wrote the screen play, George Wagner produced it, and Roy William Neill directed it.

Definitely not for children.

"Let's Have Fun" with Bert Gordon, Margaret Lindsay and John Beal

(Columbia, March 4; time, 65 min.)

Other than the appeal it may have for those who enjoy Bert Gordon's brand of humor, this program comedy is only mildly amusing. The story is extremely thin, and little imagination has been applied to the treatment, which follows a time-worn formula. Gordon, who is famed as "The Mad Russian," on Eddie Cantor's radio program, provokes some laughs by his misuse of the English language, but there is not enough of them to make one feel that he has seen a good entertainment. There are a few musical numbers, and the romantic interest is mild:—

Unable to find employment, John Beal, an actor, becomes a taxicab driver, so that he can support himself and Dorothy Ann Seese, his daughter. Bert Gordon, a dance director, determines to help Beal. He induces Leonid Kinsky and Sig Arno, owners of a Russian cafe, to back an old play that he owns. Beal is given the lead, but the play fails. Soon after, Margaret Lindsay, Beal's agent, persuades a producer to give Beal the leading role in a musical comedy. Gordon is hired as the dance director. All goes smoothly until Constance Worth, the leading lady, whose elderly boy-friend was backing the show, falls in love with Beal. Margaret, who loved Beal, is heartbroken. To save Beal from Constance, Gordon brings little Dorothy to a rehearsal. Constance is so enraged at learning about the child, that she walks out on the show, taking the show's backer with her. Meanwhile, Kinsky and Arno are approached by a radio producer, who offers them ten thousand dollars for the radio rights to the play that failed. But under the terms of their contract with Gordon, the radio rights belonged to him. Gordon learns of this offer when he visits his Russian friends. Granting them a share of the profits, he sells the rights and, with the money, backs the show that had been stranded. The show is a huge success, and Beal is acclaimed by the critics. Margaret agrees to become Dorothy's new mother.

Harry Sauber wrote the screen play, Jack Fier produced it, and Charles Barton directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Fall In" with William Tracy and Joe Sawyer

(United Artists, March 5; time, 48 min.)

Entertaining. It is the fourth in the series of Hal Roach's streamlined "army camp" comedies, the first of which was "Tanks A Million." This time, in addition to continuing their feud, William Tracy and Joe Sawyer tangle with fifth columnists. The comedy is slapstick in its broadest form and, as such, is fairly amusing. It should make a good supporting feature where something light is needed to round out a double bill:—

Because of his ability to remember everything that he hears and sees, Sergeant William Tracy is given a chance at officer's training. This riles Sergeant Joe Sawyer, who had failed to make the grade. Both men are assigned to train a batch of new recruits, among whom were a number of Kentucky "hill-billies." When the Kentuckians refuse to obey his orders, Sawyer turns them over to Tracy, hoping that his inability to cope with them would discredit him. But by representing himself as a Kentuckian, and adopting their drawl, Tracy turns the "hill-billies" into a crack outfit. One day, Tracy and his men are sent to town on MP detail. Tracy meets Jean Porter, his girl-friend, but cannot accompany her to the home of Gregory Gaye, who had turned his mansion into an army recreational center. Actually, Gaye was head of a spy ring, whose headquarters was in the basement of the mansion. Through hidden microphones, placed in flower vases, the spies were able to secure military information from the soldiers. While speaking to Tracy on the telephone, Jean accidentally discovers one of the microphones. She manages to warn Tracy before the spies drag her into the basement. The soldiers hear her cries, and a battle ensues. Tracy arrives and, breaking through a secret wall panel, reaches the basement, captures Gaye, and saves Jean. Tracy listens to the spies' radio, and learns of a spy meeting to be held that evening. But Gaye manages to hit Tracy a terrific blow on the head, causing him to lose his memory. When Sawyer overhears the doctor say that another blow may bring back Tracy's memory, he hits Tracy with a hammer. Tracy regains his memory, and the information he gives to the commander results in a roundup of the spies.

Eugene Conrad and Edward E. Seabrook wrote the screen play, Fred Guiol produced it, and Kurt Neumann directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Behind Prison Walls" with Alan Baxter, Tully Marshall and Gertrude Michael

(Producers Releasing Corp., March 22; time, 64 min.)

An entertaining program melodrama revolving around an unscrupulous industrialist, who is sent to prison for hampering the war effort when his idealistic son testifies against him. The story is rather original, and it is timely, but it does not have much human interest. It is, however, fairly amusing, since the comedy angle is stressed. The title of the picture is misleading, and tends to hurt its box-office chances; one believes it to be a sinister sort of picture. Considering the fact that it was produced on a modest budget, it is a worthy production:—

Tully Marshall, steel magnate, and Alan Baxter, his son, are sent to prison for withholding essential war materials. Baxter, an over-educated youth with exaggerated social theories, had testified against his father. While Baxter tries out his pet theories on Matt Willis, his cellmate, Marshall spends his time devising ways and means to make more millions. Edwin Maxwell, unscrupulous vice-president of Marshall's corporation, plans to get control of the business and to turn the stockholders against Marshall. But Gertrude Michael, Marshall's secretary, keeps Marshall informed of Maxwell's moves. Learning that Baxter was to be pardoned, Marshall hits upon a scheme to outwit Maxwell. He pretends to have been converted to Baxter's social ideals, and induces the youth to take over the presidency of the corporation, and to put his ideas in force. As anticipated by Marshall, the stockholders have little faith in Baxter, and the company's stock drops. Maxwell frantically unloads his holdings, which Marshall buys up. Meanwhile, Gertrude falls in love with Baxter, and confesses that his father's reformation had been part of a scheme to outmaneuver Maxwell. The newspapers, however, had given much publicity to the company's new policy of helping the little fellow, and Marshall finds himself a national hero, much to his chagrin. In a final attempt to gain control, Maxwell hires a thug to keep Baxter away from a stockholders meeting. But Marshall, who had by now really changed his ways, gains his release from prison, and arrives at the meeting in time to foil Maxwell's plans, and to affirm his faith in his son.

Van Norcross wrote the screen play, Andre Dumonceau produced it, and Steve Sekely directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Youngest Profession" with Virginia Weidler, Edward Arnold and Agnes Moorehead

(MGM, no release date set; time, 81 min.)

Very delightful entertainment. It will keep audiences chuckling almost continuously. With no less than Greer Garson, Lana Turner, Walter Pidgeon, Robert Taylor, and William Powell playing themselves in supporting bit roles, Virginia Weidler, who has blossomed into a personable young lady, plays the lead in this comedy dealing with auto-graph hunters and young movie fans. There are many humorous situations, caused mostly by Virginia's meetings with the stars, and by her wrongly concluding that her father was carrying on with his pretty secretary. Equally funny are the family scenes, particularly where Scotty Beckett, Virginia's mischievous young brother, creates much chaos with his many odd inventions. The direction and the performances are very good:—

Virginia Weidler, president of a 'teen age movie fan club, and Jean Porter, her chum, manage to have tea with Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon, who were visiting their city. When Virginia arrives home late, she is reprimanded by Marta Linden and Edward Arnold, her parents, who pay no attention to her claims of having had tea with the stars. The following morning, Virginia visits her father's office with Agnes Moorehead, her governess, a meddlesome old maid. There they meet Ann Ayars, Arnold's secretary, and Dick

Simmons, his junior partner. When Agnes sees Ann showing Arnold some lingerie, she maliciously suspects that both were having a secret "affair." In reality, the lingerie was an anniversary gift for Arnold's wife. Unable to go home because he must leave town on business, Arnold sends Ann to his house to pick up his bag. Agnes suspects that Ann will accompany Arnold on the trip, and she reveals her suspicions to Virginia. Taking Jean with her, Virginia rushes down to the railroad station, reaching there just as Arnold embraces Ann. Actually, he was congratulating her on her engagement to Simmons. Virginia decides to do something about it. Knowing that her parents will attend a charity ball on the following evening, Virginia arranges with John Carroll, strong man in a side show, to attend the ball as a foreign diplomat, and to make love to her mother; she wanted to make her father jealous. Carroll's attentions to Marta result in a fight between Arnold and himself. When Carroll confesses the hoax, Virginia runs away and joins the Salvation Army. She is finally located and brought back home. Miss Moorehead is discharged for instigating the trouble.

George Oppenheimer, Charles Lederer, and Leonard Spigelglass wrote the screen play, B. F. Zeidman produced it, and Edward Buzzell directed it. The cast includes Raymond Roe, Thurston Hall, Aileen Pringle, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Keep 'Em Slugging" with the Dead End Kids and Little Tough Guys

(Universal, April 2; time, 61 min.)

Routine program fare. Although the usual buffoonery of the "Kids" is held down to a minimum, this latest of their pictures follows a pattern familiar to the others in the series. As usual, one of the boys is victimized by a criminal combine and, to prove his innocence, he and his pals set out to apprehend the gang. It has some human interest, and Bobby Jordan arouses sympathy because of the fact that, though he had reformed, the police believe him guilty; he had a past record. The action is fairly fast, and there is some romantic interest:—

Bobby Jordan becomes morose when he is unable to secure employment because of his bad juvenile record. Evelyn Ankers, his sister, who worked in a department store, seeks the aid of Frank Albertson, shipping department head, who agrees to give Bobby a job if she will keep a date with him. Evelyn refuses. Through the secret efforts of Don Porter, Evelyn's boy-friend, Bobby gets into Albertson's department. Unknown to Evelyn, Porter, who was a floor manager, was the son of Samuel S. Hinds, owner of the store. Huntz Hall and Gabriel Dell, Bobby's pals, are given jobs in the same department. Albertson, who was secretly allied with Milburn Stone, a hi-jacker, informs Stone that Bobby had a bad record, and that he might be useful to them. Stone asks Bobby to join him, but the youth rejects the proposition. Seeing in Bobby an opportunity to cover up his own thefts, Albertson makes it appear as if the boy stole some jewelry. Bobby is jailed, and his friends are discharged. Porter believes that Bobby is innocent, and bails him out. Suspecting that Stone may have had something to do with the frame-up, Bobby decides to visit the cafe where he had met him. Arriving there, Bobby sees Albertson leaving with Joan Marsh, who was Stone's girl-friend. He follows them to a warehouse, where he overhears the gang plotting to hi-jack one of the store's trucks. Bobby rounds up his pals and, by means of a fire hose, they keep the criminals at bay until the police arrive. Bobby is promoted to shipping manager, and his pals are given back their jobs. Hinds gives Evelyn and Porter his blessing.

Brenda Weisberg wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and Christy Cabbane directed it. The cast includes Norman Abbott, Elyse Knox, Shemp Howard, Mary Gordon, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Human Comedy" with Mickey Rooney, Frank Morgan, Fay Bainter and James Craig

(MGM, no release date set; time, 116 min.)

Excellent! William Saroyan's original screenplay has been made into one of the most powerful human interest dramas ever brought to the screen: the person who could resist its deep emotional appeal would indeed be a hardened individual. Much credit is due Clarence Brown for his skillful and sympathetic handling of this heart-stirring story, which revolves around a small-town telegraph messenger boy, his family, and his friends. Through the joys and the sorrows of these people, who have their counterpart in every American home, this film depicts the courage with which the American people are facing life in these trying times. Throughout the action there are scenes that will tug at one's heart-strings, and others that will fill one with rollicking laughter. Although the story is in tune with the present day conflict, there are no war scenes. All the action takes place in a small California town, except for a few brief sequences in an army canteen and in a troop train. In spite of the fact that there is considerable dialogue, a good deal of which preaches Saroyan's philosophy—love for your fellow man, one never loses interest in the proceedings.

The characterizations are wonderfully human, and unforgettable. In Mickey Rooney we find a young high school boy, who works as a telegraph messenger boy from four in the afternoon until midnight, thus helping to support his widowed mother, his older sister, and his five-year-old brother; his elder brother, who had been the breadwinner of the family, had been inducted into the army. Through Mickey's delivering of telegrams, and his contact with the townspeople, is revealed their reactions to the effects of war. Mickey Rooney's performance is unquestionably his best to date.

Frank Morgan is splendid as the old-time telegrapher, once the speediest in the business, who constantly fears that the telegraph company will force him into retirement. He drinks heavily to assuage this fear, but is extremely sensitive about his inebriated condition. His counsel to Mickey and the boyish respect the lad pays to him are among the film's highlights.

The surprise of the picture, however, is the performance of little Jack Jenkins, who plays Mickey's five-year-old brother. His childish questions, and his expressions of complete wonderment at all that goes on about him, will delight audiences. He is an appealing youngster, who performs naturally, and his ability to register joy, disappointment, and fear marks him as a definite "find."

The others in the cast are superb. Fay Bainter, as Mickey's mother, a harp-playing, understanding woman, who tends to her brood and patiently answers her little son's many questions; Donna Reed, her 'teen age daughter, a good girl; Van Johnson, as the son in the army; John Craven, Johnson's buddy, an orphan who never had a home life, but who is made to feel that his home is with Johnson's family; Rita Quigley, Johnson's sweetheart; James Craig, as the robust manager of the telegraph office, a rugged but kindly individualist; Marsha Hunt, a spoiled but understanding society girl, who marries Craig; Darryl Hickman, as little Jack's buck-toothed bosom pal; Mary Nash, Mickey's middle-aged school teacher, who defends him against discrimination—all are lovable characters.

There are many memorable scenes, both tragic and humorous, among which are: Mickey delivering to Ann Ayars a telegram informing her that her son had been killed in action, and her giving Mickey candy that she had saved for her boy; soldiers on a troop train quitting their card and dice games to join in the singing of a church hymn; Mickey's reluctance to deliver a rival's singing telegram to his girl; the visit to the library by little Jack and Darryl, who hopes that some day he may be able to read; little Jack's joy when a

Negro hobo, on a passing freight train, waves back to him; the kindly old farmer who secretly and gleefully watches a group of children attempt to filch apricots from one of his trees; Mickey's classroom discourse on the human nose; and Mickey discovering Morgan dead, slumped over his typewriter, which held an uncompleted War Department message to Mickey's mother informing her of Johnson's death. All these are but a few of the scenes that play havoc with one's emotions.

The story, which is made up of a series of correlated episodes, is void of intrigue or villains. It is a simple, honest tale about plain people, and the every-day incidents that occur in their daily lives. Its simplicity is refreshing, and its emotional impact is genuine.

"The Human Comedy" is a credit to its maker, as well as to the industry itself.

Howard Estabrook wrote the screen play from William Saroyan's original. Clarence Brown produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Slightly Dangerous" with Lana Turner and Robert Young

(MGM, no release date set; time, 94 min.)

Although this farce lacks a substantial story, it offers enough comedy and romance to satisfy the rank and file. It is a story of rags to riches, via the deception route, in which Lana Turner quits her job as a soda clerk in a small-town store, goes to the big city, "glamorizes" herself, and deceives an old millionaire into believing that she is his long lost daughter. Most of the comedy is brought about by the efforts of Robert Young, the store manager, to discredit her, and to bring her back to the town. Although the story is thin, and it is developed according to formula, it does not become boring because the action is breezy throughout. The production values are good:—

When Lana Turner finds her life as a soda clerk in a small-town department store monotonous, she blindfolds herself and mixes whatever drink a customer orders. The customers are delighted, but Robert Young, the manager, is not. He calls Lana into his office, and reprimands her. She becomes hysterical, and rushes out of his office; everyone believes that Young had molested her. The following day, Lana disappears from town, leaving a suicide note. All are convinced of Young's guilt, and he loses his job. Lana, however, is very much alive. She goes to the big city where she spends her last dollar to remodel her personality. While passing a newspaper office, Lana gets into an accident in which a can of paint hits her and ruins her newly acquired glamour. When Eugene Pallette, the publisher, asks Lana for her name, she feigns amnesia. She leads Pallette to believe that she is the long missing daughter of Walter Brennan, an industrial tycoon. With luck and much subterfuge, Lana convinces Brennan that she is his daughter. Young recognizes Lana from newspaper photographs, and follows her to the city. When she refuses him recognition, Young determines to show her up. He confronts her with a fake marriage license, and insists that she is his wife. Because she had claimed amnesia, Lana cannot deny it. She has no choice but to go with him. Meanwhile, in checking Young's claim of marriage, Brennan discovers that Lana is not his daughter. Brennan follows in pursuit, but by the time he catches up with them, they had fallen in love with each other. Young and Lana confess the hoax, but Brennan prefers that Lana go on being his daughter, and he gives them his blessing.

Charles Lederer and George Oppenheimer wrote the screen play, Pandro S. Berman produced it, and Wesley Ruggles directed it. The cast includes Dame Mae Whitty, Alan Mowbray, Ward Bond, Pamela Blake, and others.

Adult entertainment.

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An Obstructionist Within Our Ranks

An example of the type of publicity our industry can do without is the following item, which appeared in Jimmie Fidler's column in the March 6 issue of the New York Daily Mirror. Says Fidler:

"The average movie-worker has seen things optimistically for a year, but may be badly let down. There has been a shortage of trained studio workers; because of that, workers drew more pay.

"The industry's prosperity is fantastic. But pictures are grossing TOO MUCH money.

"Long runs are the rule not the exception. In key centers eight or nine weeks are common, and films could profitably be held even longer. A big backlog of pictures is piling up with no first-run theatres to show them. Producers won't shunt them into second-run houses and lose much potential revenue.

"New theatres cannot be built under war-time conditions, so the alternative is to curtail production, maybe 50 per cent. No use making pictures if they can't be shown. Fewer pictures mean fewer jobs—so workers face unemployment because of prosperity."

Such a statement creates a false impression with Fidler's readers, and is detrimental to the best interests of the industry.

Let us examine first Fidler's remarks regarding the industry's prosperity. Notice that in addition to pointing out that this prosperity is "fantastic," he says also that pictures are making "TOO MUCH" money—and, for emphasis, he prints these words in capital letters, so that his readers would be sure to see it.

Why does Fidler stress this prosperity? What is his motive? Is he trying to build up public support for those congressmen and state legislators who on the slightest provocation will introduce a bill that would tax further our already tax-burdened industry?

In these days, with war taxes an ever increasing burden on the public, when millions of people who never before paid income taxes find that they must do so now, it is not difficult to rouse the public into feeling that those who are allegedly rolling in money should carry the brunt of the taxes. Such a movement can become most popular in these times. And the manner in which Fidler has chosen to publicize the industry's prosperity can serve only to rile a tax-ridden citizenry, and to weaken whatever opposition the industry may offer against discriminatory tax proposals.

Fidler goes on to tell his readers that we have so

many pictures waiting for release, and that business is so good, we may have to curtail our production by fifty per cent and, as a result, many of our workers may lose their jobs.

Today, when our war industries are pleading for more manpower, does Fidler expect his readers to shed tears because, as he says, movie workers may find themselves unemployed? Does he not know that one of the greatest problems facing our studios is the drafting of its employees into war plants? Surely a man like Fidler, who is capable of picking up some of the choicest bits of Hollywood gossip, would know this. What, then, could his motive be?

Can it be that he is trying to rouse the public to deride the claims being made by industry committees, who for months have been trying to convince Washington officials that unless some provisions are made to grant the industry relief, production may have to be curtailed, theatres may be compelled to close down and, in general, the part the industry is playing in the war effort may be impeded?

After reading Fidler's column, the average man, who does not understand the intricacies of our business, is prone to laugh at such claims. And why not? Didn't he read in Fidler's column that the industry is so far ahead of itself on production it cannot give its workers steady employment? Didn't Fidler tell him that there is no point in making more pictures, since there are not enough theatres to play the pictures that have already been made? Mr. Average Citizen might well say to himself, "What is the motion picture industry up to? Are they placing their own selfish interests before that of the war effort?"

This paper does not know how many people read Fidler, but it assumes that the count must be in millions, since his is a syndicated column, which is published in many newspapers throughout the country. He should be mindful of the fact that most of his readers know little, if anything, about what makes the industry tick, and that they accept at face value the comments they read. It is for that reason Fidler should avoid an improper presentation of the facts when making his remarks, for it results in the public getting a distorted viewpoint of industry affairs. In such a case, the damage is irreparable.

Jimmy Fidler should remember that, without Hollywood, he would be just another "guy" named Jim; he shouldn't bite the hand that feeds him.

"Harrigan's Kid" with William Gargan, Frank Craven and Bobby Readick

(MGM, no release date set; time, 79 min.)

Fairly good program fare. It is a story about a youth who is taught the art of crooked riding by an unscrupulous former jockey, but who is regenerated through the kindly influence of an honest trainer. Bobby Readick, who is a newcomer to the screen, overacts in spots, but on the whole his performance is very good, and he shows great promise. The action is moderately paced. As in all horse-racing pictures, there is a thrilling race at the finish. There are no women in the cast:—

Under the tutelage of William Gargan, a one time great jockey, Bobby Readick learns the science of riding, as well as shady practices in the event his horse cannot win in a fair manner. An avid student, Readick idolizes Gargan, and believes him when Gargan drums into him the wisdom of making everything he does "pay off." Readick is shocked when Gargan sells his contract to the Ranley stables, but he soon discovers that his motive is ulterior. Gargan wanted a crooked jockey to ride the Ranley horses, so that he, together with J. Carrol Naish, a bookmaker, can be sure that the horses Readick rides will lose. Frank Craven, trainer for the Ranley stables, sees a fine quality beneath Readick's cynical, tough-guy exterior. When Readick displays his smart-alecky manner, Craven disciplines him gently but firmly. He demotes him to stable boy, but lectures him on sportsmanship, honesty, and the satisfaction of winning by fair means. At the end of a turbulent year, Readick's reformation is complete. He forgets his tacit promise to obey Gargan's orders. Readick is proud of his newly-won Ranley racing colors, and overjoyed when told that he is to ride the Ranley entry in the great derby. But his joy is short-lived; Gargan seeks him out and attempts to intimidate him into promising to lose the race. Readick flatly refuses. Although advised that Readick had been visiting with Gargan and Naish, Craven's faith in the youth remains unshaken. Readick wins the race to the delight of Craven, as well as Gargan, who is killed when Naish throws him off an upper grandstand tier.

Alan Friedman and Martin Berkely wrote the screen play, Irving Starr produced it, and Charles F. Riesner directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"He Hired the Boss" with Stuart Erwin and Evelyn Venable

(20th Century-Fox, April 2; time, 73 min.)

A good program comedy. It is a remake of "\$10 Raise," produced by Fox in 1935, except that in this version some of the angles have been brought up to date, and the action is more melodramatic. The story has human appeal and good comedy situations. The acting, too, is good. The action revolves around a meek office clerk, who is mistreated by his cranky employer. As the clerk, Stuart Erwin wins the spectator's sympathy, for he displays fine character, particularly so toward the finish when he finds himself in a position to retaliate against his employer, but treats him in a kindly manner instead. The closing scenes where Stuart traps a gang of silk thieves are exciting. The romantic interest is pleasant:—

Stuart Erwin, a mild-mannered bookkeeper, hesitates to ask Thurston Hall, his mean employer, for a raise so that he could wed Evelyn Venable, Hall's secretary. Unlucky for Erwin, he asks for the raise immediately after Hall had been threatened by the bank because of his failure to meet an overdue loan. Hall turns him down. When Erwin gets his induction notice, Hall sponsors a dinner for him, and informs him that his job will be waiting for him when he returns. On the following day Erwin is rejected by the army, and Hall gives him back his job at a reduced salary. Meanwhile William T. Orr, Hall's son, seeks to marry Vivian Blaine, Evelyn's sister, despite the objections of his father. Hall bluntly informs Evelyn that her job depended on her breaking up the romance. That night Evelyn and Erwin entertain the young couple, and encourage them to elope. On his way home, Erwin meets Chick Chandler, who owed him four

hundred dollars. Erwin agrees to give him two hundred dollars more in exchange for a deed to four lots. They celebrate the sale in a bar. Slightly inebriated, Erwin gets Hall out of bed in the early hours of the morning, and tells him what he thinks of him. Hall discharges him. The following morning, Evelyn, too, berates Hall, and quits her job. By a stroke of luck, Erwin learns that his property is rich in bauxite and, with the aid of Emmett Vogan, the bank manager, sells it for one hundred thousand dollars. That night, while on air raid duty, Erwin discovers and helps to capture a gang of thieves looting Hall's warehouse. When Hall arrives at his office on the following day, he finds that Erwin had been appointed by the bank to run his business. Erwin attempts to be stern with Hall, but cannot go through with it. He instead asks Hall to remain and direct the business he had built. Hall grants him a ten dollar raise.

Ben Markson and Irving Cummings, Jr., wrote the screen play, Sol M. Wurtzel produced it, and Thomas Z. Loring directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Assignment in Brittany" with Pierre Aumont and Susan Peters

(MGM, no release date set; time, 95 min.)

A fairly good spy adventure melodrama, but it does not rise much above the level of program fare. Although there is a lack of star names, the popularity of the novel of the same title, from which the story is adapted, may offset this factor. The film marks the introduction of Pierre Aumont to American audiences. He is quite handsome, and his personality is agreeable. The story revolves around his posing as a French "Quisling," whom he resembles closely, and his efforts to locate a secret Nazi submarine base. From beginning to end the action is filled with excitement and suspense, reaching its climax in a thrilling Commando raid, which destroys the base. Scenes of Nazi terrorism and the stout resistance of the French peasants are worked into the plot. The romantic interest is appealing:—

After completing a dangerous assignment in Arabia, Capt. Pierre Aumont, of the Free French, reports to Miles Mander, his commanding officer in London. Mander has another assignment ready. Somewhere on the Brittany coast an innocent fishing village served as a secret submarine base, and it was Aumont's job to locate it. He had been selected for the assignment because of his remarkable resemblance to a wounded French poilu, a known "Quisling," whose home town was in the vicinity of the secret base. After studying the poilu's background and family connections, Aumont is informed that it will be necessary for him to live with Margaret Wycherly, the poilu's mother, and to take the poilu's place in the affections of Susan Peters, his sweetheart. Aumont lands near the town by parachute. He succeeds well enough with the villagers and Susan, but Miss Wycherly spots his deception. She decides to help him. Through his meeting with Signe Hasso, an alluring woman, Aumont learns that she is a traitor, and that she and the poilu were secretly in league with the Nazis. Richard Whorf, the village school teacher, despises Aumont; he was desperately in love with Signe, and believed him to be the poilu. When Aumont learns that a native fisherman, supposedly friendly to the Allies, was actually an informer, he forces the man to take him to the Nazi base, and into the office of the Commander. He kills both the Commander and the fisherman, and manages to escape. Aumont makes his way to a secret radio station, but before he can send his information to England, the Nazis capture him. They subject him to hideous torture. When all appears hopeless, Aumont is rescued by Whorf, who now knew of his identity. Aumont gets his message to England. It brings swift action from the Commandos, who blow up the base. Whorf loses his life in the battle, but not until he kills Signe. Aumont and Susan return to England on a torpedo boat.

Anthony Veiller, William H. Wright, and Howard E. Rogers wrote the screen play, J. Walter Ruben produced it, and Jack Conway directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Buckskin Frontier" with Richard Dix,
Albert Dekker and Jane Wyatt**

(United Artists, release date not set; time, 76 min.)

Good photography, an interesting story, and capable acting lifts this program western melodrama far above other pictures of its type; it will more than satisfy the western fans, and certainly please others. The story, which deals with the fight of the railroads for right-of-ways through the west, has human interest and holds the spectator in pretty tense suspense. There is a love affair, which, though charming, is not without clouds, for the villain leads the heroine to believe that the hero is unfaithful to her. A good deal of shooting and a number of fierce fist fights keeps the action moving at a fast pace. The period is in the 1840's:—

Sent west to build a cut-off for the Missouri Central Railroad, Richard Dix encounters instant opposition from Lee J. Cobb, a powerful wagon train tycoon, who despised the railroads. He warns Dix to keep off his land. When Dix pays no heed to his threats, Cobb orders Albert Dekker, his aide, to smash Dix's surveying equipment. Learning that Jane Wyatt, Cobb's daughter, was arriving from the east to visit her father, Dix hurries to meet her in Topeka, hoping that, through her, he will get Cobb to relent. Together with Max Baer, husky wagon boss, Dekker, who loved Jane, meets the train in Topeka, only to find that Dix had been her fellow passenger during the trip. He realizes that they had fallen in love with each other, and offers no opposition. Unknown to Dekker, Cobb had hired Victor Jory to thwart Dix. Joe Sawyer, Jory's accomplice, and some of his men, attack Dix in a street fight. But with the aid of Dekker and Baer, Dix beats them off. Dix visits Cobb in a final attempt to get his cooperation, but the wagon owner refuses to deal with him. When Dix secures a right-of-way from the Land Commission, Cobb orders Jory to sabotage the construction work. Dekker refuses to be a part of this scheme; he leaves Cobb and joins up with Dix. In a final showdown, Jory decides to use gunfire to drive Dix and his construction crew out of the territory. The crew fights a losing battle against Jory's overwhelming forces, but Cobb, who had become convinced that he cannot halt progress, rounds up his men and comes to the rescue. Jane and Dix receive Cobb's blessing, while Dekker starts a romance with Lola Lane, one of Dix's friends.

Norman Houston wrote the screen play, Harry Sherman produced it, and Lesley Selander directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Hello, Frisco, Hello" with Alice Faye,
John Payne, Jack Oakie and Lynn Bari**

(20th Century-Fox, March 26; time, 98 min.)

San Francisco's Barbary Coast of the early 1900's serves as the background for this lavishly produced musical, in Technicolor; it should be received well by the masses. As is usual in pictures of this type, the story is thin, but there is enough comedy and musical interludes to keep one consistently entertained. The period has been reproduced with painstaking detail, and the Technicolor makes the most of the colorful costumes of the era. Most of the songs are the hit tunes of that day, and some of them will bring back memories to many a spectator. The story revolves around a quartet of entertainers, and their rise and fall as a result of their leader's social-climbing. Alice Faye is quite fetching, and her singing is pleasant. John Payne, as the leader, is effective. Jack Oakie and June Havoc, who make up the other half of the foursome, furnish the comedy and dance routines. The picture should do good business:—

A group of entertainers headed by John Payne, and including Alice Faye, June Havoc, and Jack Oakie, resolve to stick together when Ward Bond, a saloon-keeper throws out their act because it attracted customers away from his bar. To get back at Bond, the group joins forces with a Mission band, and entertain in the street. When the saloon-

keepers find their places emptied by the free street shows, they pay Payne to abandon the idea. With this money, Payne opens his own cabaret, and it is an immediate success. It even attracts Lynn Bari, a madcap heiress from Nob Hill, who invites Payne to a party at her mansion. To live on Nob Hill was one of Payne's ambitions. Payne opens a few more cabarets, and becomes very wealthy. Alice, by now a popular star, is unhappy because of Payne's failure to return her love. When a London producer offers to star her in a show, Alice hopes that this news would awaken Payne's love for her. But Payne, who had been fascinated by Lynn, encourages her to accept the offer. Her success is great. Meanwhile, Lynn loses her fortune, and marries Payne. In keeping with his new social position, Payne backs an opera. But because of Lynn's spending, and the opera's losses, he loses his fortune. Lynn leaves him. Alice returns to San Francisco to find June and Oakie doing their old routines at Bond's saloon. She learns that Payne had become a barker with a carnival. Through Laird Cregar, a drunken gold prospector, who Payne had frequently staked, Alice secretly finances Payne in a new cabaret venture. On opening night Payne becomes furious when he accidentally discovers that Alice had financed him. But his anger subsides when she goes on the stage and sings a love song she and Payne had always sung together.

Robert Ellis, Helen Logan and Richard Macauley wrote the screen play, Milton Sperling produced it, and Bruce Humberstone directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Dixie Dugan" with Lois Andrews,
Charles Ruggles and James Ellison**

(20th Century-Fox, March 12; time, 66 min.)

An unimpressive program comedy. The story is a satire on present day living conditions and operational methods of government agencies in war-time Washington. Little imagination has been used in its presentation and, for the most part, the comedy situations fall flat. The talents of Charles Ruggles and Charlotte Greenwood are wasted in inconsequential parts. The other players struggle along with character roles that are far beneath their capabilities:—

After listening to a radio broadcast by James Ellison, head of the MOWPFW (Mobilization of Women Power for War), Lois Andrews determines to do her part in the war effort. Through the Civil Service Commission, she secures employment as Ellison's secretary. But Ellison has an aversion for women secretaries, and he instructs Dave Willock, his aide, to get rid of her. Willock, however, points out that the opposition newspapers will crucify him if they learn that he had discharged a female employee. Helen Reynolds, Ellison's fiancée, is displeased at his employing a pretty secretary, but he explains that it is beyond his control. At home, Lois speaks so highly of her boss that Eddie Foy, Jr., her boy-friend, becomes jealous. He visits Ellison and asks him to discharge Lois; he wanted her to forget her career so that she would marry him. To get her out of his office, Ellison assigns Lois on an outside job, instructing her to compile a report on why women are not at war work. After an extensive survey, Lois proudly hands in her report with certain recommendations. When Ellison ignores the report, Lois quits her job. "Judge" Raymond Walburn, an imposter, who boarded at Lois home, suggests that she give the story to one of the opposition newspapers. In return for the "Judge's" favor, the newspaper agrees to support him in the coming elections. Meanwhile, Ellison had read Lois' report, and found it extraordinary. He apologizes to Lois and makes a national broadcast about her work. The newspaper kills the story, and Lois becomes a national heroine. The "Judge" is uncovered as a draft evader, and is arrested.

Lec Loeb and Harold Buchman wrote the screen play, Walter Morosco produced it, and Otto Brower directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Moon Is Down" with Sir Cedric Hardwicke, Henry Travers and Dorris Bowden

(20th Century-Fox, April 9; time, 90 min.)

This is an intelligent and powerful war drama, filled with deep human interest and emotional appeal. It is an adaption of John Steinbeck's best-selling novel and stage play, dealing with the invasion of Norway, and the heroism and courage of the Norwegian people in the face of oppression. All the action takes place in a Norwegian mining village, and it is void of wild melodramatics. But what it lacks in fast action is more than made up for in some of the tensely dramatic scenes. One such scene is where five hostages are publicly executed in retaliation for an unsuccessful attempt on the life of a German officer. One is deeply touched by the horrifying cries of the victims' families. The direction is tops, and the performances uniformly fine. Outstanding are Sir Cedric Hardwicke as the Nazi Colonel, a veteran of numerous invasions, who, though he does not hesitate to use ruthless measures, seeks to avoid them, for he realizes that such measures serve only to strengthen the villagers' resistance; Henry Travers as the town mayor, a kindly but stout-hearted person, who refuses to cooperate with Hardwicke; and Peter Van Eyck as the young Nazi Lieutenant, whose morale is broken by the refusal of the villagers to show signs of friendship. There is no comedy relief, and a tragic note is sustained throughout. It is a stirring tale about a plain and sincere people, and their unconquerable will to live without a master. It should appeal to most audiences:—

Aided by E. J. Ballantine, a local "Quisling," Nazi forces, headed by Colonel Sir Cedric Hardwicke, occupy a Norwegian village before the people can offer resistance. Hardwicke quarters his staff in the home of Mayor Henry Travers, hoping to lead the villagers to believe that Travers is siding with him. Travers realizes this, but is in no position to protest. Sorely in need of the iron produced by the village, the Nazis force the people to work long hours. The miners revolt, and Capt. Hans Schumm is detailed to subdue them. William Post, Jr., insulted by Schumm, goes berserk and kills him. After a semblance of a trial, Post is executed. As the months pass, the Nazis feel more and more the effects of the unified resistance. The villagers signal to British bombers, which blast the mine, and commit many acts of sabotage. Despite reprisals, they do not stop. Lieut. Peter Van Eyck grows hysterical over the futility of conquering these people. Lonely to the point of illness, he visits Dorris Bowden, Post's pretty widow. Deceptively alluring, she invites him into her bedroom and stabs him to death, thus avenging her husband's death. Unable to cope with a new campaign of resistance, which breaks out when British planes drop hundreds of small dynamite sticks by parachute, Hardwicke is superseded in authority by Ballantine. At his order, Hardwicke issues a proclamation threatening death to the mayor and the town's leading citizens unless the dynamiting ceased. The villagers do not heed the warning. With unwavering heart, Travers leads the condemned men to the scaffold on the day of the execution. As the order to spring the traps is given, a series of explosions wrecks the mine and many buildings. With lifted faces and closed eyes, the villagers sing their national anthem.

Nunnally Johnson wrote the screen play and produced it. Irving Pichel directed it. The cast includes Margaret Wycherly, Ernest Dorian, and others.

Adult entertainment.

"Hit Parade of 1943" with John Carroll and Susan Hayward

(Republic, March 19; time, 86 min.)

A sparkling musical, which, for those who enjoy popular music, is a most satisfying entertainment. There are plenty of catchy tunes, a few of which are destined to become top song hits. The many admirers of the three name bands—Freddy Martin, Count Basie, and Ray McKinley—enhances the film's box-office value. The music publishing business serves as the background for the story, which revolves

around a pretty song writer, who determines to avenge herself against a crooked but charming music publisher. Although the story follows a familiar pattern, it has enough comedy and romance to please most audiences. The production values are good, and there are several elaborate dance numbers:—

Hoping to become a professional song writer, Susan Hayward pays fifty dollars to John Carroll and Walter Catlett, music publishers, to publish one of her songs. Carroll, however, changes the song's title, takes credit for writing it, and capitalizes on its success. Eve Arden, Susan's cousin, urges her to expose Carroll. But Susan contrives a more subtle form of revenge when Carroll asks her to "ghost write" his songs. She agrees to his proposal, intending to expose him after he becomes more successful. Susan, however, succumbs to his charm and falls in love with him. This incurs the jealousy of Gail Patrick, a song "plugger." Carroll, too, had fallen in love with Susan, and he planned to reveal her as the composer of his new song hit. But before he can do this, Gail deliberately informs Susan that she was engaged to marry Carroll, thus breaking up the romance. Carroll seeks to convince Susan of his love by announcing that she composed his song hits, but the vindictive Gail uses her influence with the manager of the country's foremost orchestras, and succeeds in keeping Carroll off the air. When Carroll learns of a bond-selling broadcast, in which it is offered to play any song requested, provided the maker of the request buys a bond, he sells everything he owns to raise enough money for a bond. Meanwhile, Catlett rushes to Susan's home, and convinces her that Gail had lied. Susan hurries to the broadcasting station, and patches up her quarrel with Carroll.

Frank Gill, Jr., wrote the screen play, Albert J. Cohen produced it, and Albert S. Rogell directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Rhythm of the Islands" with Allan Jones, Jane Frazee and Andy Devine

(Universal, April 16; time, 59 min.)

Average program fare. Except for its South Sea island locale, this comedy with music adheres to the Universal formula for program musicals—dance routines, singing duets, slapstick comedy, and a story that will not tax the intelligence of a backward child. As diversion, it is best suited for small-town and neighborhood theatres. Allan Jones and Jane Frazee handle the singing and romantics, while Andy Devine and Mary Wickes take care of the comedy. There are a few typical native dance ensembles. The action presumably takes place before Pearl Harbor:—

Allan Jones and Andy Devine buy a small tropical island, which they turn into a tourists' mecca. Jones poses as a native chieftain, and Devine as a beachcomber. When tourists visit the island, Jones stages tribunal dances, using native talent. Jones decides to sell the island when he is unable to meet the mortgage payments. He selects as his victim Ernest Truex, a Chicago millionaire, who had come to the island with Marjorie Gateson, his wife, and Jane Frazee, his daughter. Truex agrees to pay him ten thousand dollars. Still masquerading as a chieftain, Jones makes love to Jane. Meanwhile, Devine has his hands full; Mary had unexpectedly arrived at the island, and had found Acquanetta, a native girl, making love to him. On the night he was to receive Truex's check, Jones plans a celebration. But his plans are upset by the arrival of unfriendly natives, who had come to reclaim the island as their own. All are captured. Jane blames Jones for her predicament, and discovers that he is a fake chief. Jones, however, gets into the good graces of Chief Nestor Paiva, and gains the release of all by agreeing to leave the island. But for romantic reasons, the women refuse to leave. Taking matters in hand, the chief unites in marriage Jane and Jones, and Mary and Devine. He decrees that all may remain on the island.

Oscar Brodney and M. M. Musselman wrote the screen play, Bernard W. Burton produced it, and Roy William Neill directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

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Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 1943

No. 12

HERE AND THERE

RECENTLY, ED SULLIVAN, Broadway columnist of the New York Daily News, asked his readers what their decision would be if they sat on a draft board, or on an appeal board, to determine the deferment of radio stars and motion picture celebrities.

Sullivan reports that, in the first batch of mail received, his readers were two and one-half to one against deferment. He adds: "The odds may swing around as the mail continues to pour in, but usually the odds established in the first mail delivery remain constant. . . . Here's something interesting—and it indicates how smart is John Public: Nearly everyone says that Bob Hope, married and father of two adopted children, should be deferred."

Assuming that the opinion registered by Sullivan's readers is indicative of the opinion held by the American public, it would appear that any success the industry may have in gaining deferment for certain of its stars would not meet with public approval, unless the star was married, and a father.

It is not difficult to understand such a feeling; most people have a loved one serving in the armed forces and, off-hand, they can see no reason why others should be given special consideration. Such a feeling is even stronger if the person for whom special consideration is sought happens to be a public figure, as is the case with motion picture stars.

Hostile public opinion to star deferment is a problem the industry cannot easily overcome. This paper doubts whether an intensified publicity campaign, aimed at convincing the public that actors are essential to the war effort, will appreciably change the public's opinion. Moreover, few stars would be willing to become a target of the public's derision.

MGM's recent appeal on behalf of Mickey Rooney, who was classified in 1A by a Los Angeles draft board, met with unfavorable public reaction, despite the support given to MGM by many newspapers, which agreed that Rooney was more useful to the war effort in pictures than on a battle front. (Rooney has already been classified in 4F because of physical disability—high blood pressure).

The only way by which this problem can be solved is for the government to step in and declare that motion pictures are essential to the war effort. And to appease the public, the government should follow a suggestion made recently by Al Jolson, veteran entertainer, who proposed that all actors be made "soldiers of morale . . . with a quasi-military obligation," thus averting any stigma when it comes to the younger men such as Mickey Rooney, Kay Kyser, or Robert Taylor—all can do more for their country in front of a camera, or entertaining soldiers in the camps, than on the battle fronts shouldering a gun.

With actors given a quasi-military status, they will not feel like slackers any more than do locomotive engineers, who transport soldiers and war supplies. And under such conditions, it should not be difficult for the industry to bring about favorable public reaction through a publicity campaign.

* * *

RKO HAS ANNOUNCED THAT all the net profits derived from its distribution of "Forever and a Day," will be donated to the National Association for the Prevention of Infantile Paralysis, and to charitable organizations of the United Nations.

"Forever and a Day," is the picture for which seventy-eight top-flight British stars and featured players in Hollywood contributed their services in appreciation of the aid given by the American people to British charities at the beginning of the war. The production costs, which were advanced by RKO, will be recouped from film rentals.

Writing of this picture in the March 8 bulletin of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, Mr. Pete J. Wood, secretary of that organization, comes forward with an excellent suggestion. Says Pete:

"It is very generous of RKO to forego their profits on this picture, but they should bear in mind the fact that theatres showing this picture join as donors to the extent of the net rental paid by them. We therefore recommend a trailer at the end worded substantially as follows:

"In conjunction with RKO, this theatre is happy to announce that the net rental paid by us for "Forever and a Day" is being donated to the National Association for the Prevention of Infantile Paralysis."

* * *

A WELCOME RELIEF to exhibitors, in the seventeen eastern states affected by the pleasure driving ban, is the announcement by OPA Administrator Prentiss M. Brown that, henceforth, motorists are on their honor not to misuse their car-driving privileges.

Mr. Brown ordered an end to the snooping by OPA agents and local police, whose badgering of the public had resulted in their being nicknamed as the American "Gestapo."

Patrons who live in outlying districts, and depend on the family car as their only means of transportation, will now be able to do their shopping and visit their favorite theatre without fear that an OPA agent is lurking in the shadows, eager to pounce upon them for committing a "crime" against patriotism.

Mr. Brown hinted that, if the gasoline supply situation improved, the pleasure-driving ban may be rescinded before the end of March.

"The Purple V" with John Archer, Mary McLeod and Rex Williams
(Republic, March 26; time, 58 min.)

A fair action melodrama of program grade, suitable for small-town and neighborhood houses. Although the theme—the escape from Germany by a downed British flier—is not novel, having been done many times in recent films, it holds the attention to some degree, because there is human interest and suspense. The closing scenes, where the hero and heroine manage to steal a plane from a secret Nazi airport, are fairly exciting. There is no comedy relief, and the romantic interest is incidental:—

After bailing out of his damaged plane over Germany, John Archer, a RAF flier, finds the wreckage of a Nazi plane he had shot down. He discovers the pilot dead, and a German officer wounded. Archer changes clothes with the dead pilot, administers aid to the dying officer, and receives from him a confidential report for Hitler, before the man notices the "V" on his forearm, revealing his identity. Making his way to the home of Professor Fritz Kortner, under whom he had studied in a German university, Archer meets Rex Williams, the professor's crippled son, and Mary McLeod, his daughter. The family offers to aid him. Meanwhile the dying officer had been found by Kurt Katch, Gestapo leader, and he discloses that he had been tricked by a man with a "V" on his forearm. Katch institutes a search for Archer. To help Archer escape, Williams tattoos a "V" on his arm, dons Archer's Nazi uniform, and allows himself to be trailed, shooting his brains out before he can be captured. The professor arranges for Archer to impersonate Williams in order to reach the border. Katch, however, had discovered the dead Williams' identity through fingerprints, and he arrives at the professor's home just as Archer prepares to leave. Archer and the professor overpower and kill him. Archer heads for the border, taking Mary with him. They manage to reach the border, only to be intercepted by the guards. Just as they are being taken into custody, the professor appears, dressed in the uniform of the slain Katch. He orders the "prisoners" into his car, and takes them to an airport, where he arranges for a plane to take them to Berlin. The ruse is discovered when the radio announces that the real Katch is dead. Mary and Archer manage to reach a plane that takes them to England, but the professor loses his life covering their escape.

Bertram Millhauser and Curt Siodmak wrote the screen play, and George Sherman produced and directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"He's My Guy" with Dick Foran, Irene Hervey and Joan Davis
(Universal, March 26; time, 65 min.)

Pleasant program fare. Joan Davis' capers and the catchy melody, "He's My Guy," helps lift this comedy with music a notch above the average run of similar pictures Universal specializes in. Added attractions are the specialty numbers by the Mills Brothers, Gertrude Niesen, and the Diamond Brothers. The story, which revolves around the marital difficulties of a young vaudeville team, adds nothing to the film's entertainment values, and merely serves as a framework for the musical numbers. The picture has the flavor of a vaudeville show:—

Dick Foran and Irene Hervey, a married vaudeville team, quarrel frequently; Irene was tired of playing tank towns, and wanted to settle down. Foran, however, had dreams of becoming a "big-time" headliner. In the midst of one of their quarrels, the young couple are visited by Joan Davis, former dancing comedienne, who had quit vaudeville for a defense job. Joan urges them to do the same. Irene is willing, but not Foran. After a bitter quarrel, they separate. Irene goes to live with Joan, and secures employment at the defense plant as private secretary to Donald Douglas, the personnel manager. Discovering that the plant's employees needed relaxation, Irene conceives the idea of staging a home-talent show. Since Douglas seemed interested in her personally, Irene

felt that she could get him to approve the idea. So that Foran could stage the show, Irene effects a reconciliation with him, and asks him to pose as Joan's husband; she did not want Douglas to know of her marriage. Foran reluctantly agrees. Douglas approves the plan, and agrees to let Foran stage the show. Foran recruits acts from among the employees, and all goes well until he loses his temper over the attentions Douglas pays to Irene. Again they quarrel and separate. The show goes on without Foran, and Douglas takes credit for its success. When it comes Irene's turn to sing, she is lost without Foran. But when she hears her accompaniment, she realizes that Foran is at the piano. When Joan informs the president of the plant that Foran, and not Douglas, was responsible for the show's success, Irene and Foran are named co-directors of entertainment.

M. Coates Webster and Grant Garrett wrote the screen play, Will Cowan produced it, and Edward F. Cline directed it. The cast includes Fuzzy Knight and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"After Midnite With Boston Blackie" with Chester Morris and George E. Stone
(Columbia, March 18; time, 65 min.)

This latest of the "Boston Blackie" program melodramas is below par for the series. Handicapped by a far-fetched plot and too much comedy, most of which is silly, the picture will prove disappointing to those who may expect an exciting melodrama. The theme is similar to the other pictures in the series; Chester Morris, a reformed crook, finds himself falsely accused of a crime, with both the police and the criminals after him. The action drags in spots, and one's interest wanders because of the unimaginative treatment given the story. There is no romantic interest:—

Walter Baldwin, an ex-convict on parole, is tortured by Cy Kendall, a night club owner, into revealing the whereabouts of three valuable diamonds. On a train heading east with George E. Stone, his pal, Chester Morris, ex-crook, receives a telegram from Ann Savage, Baldwin's daughter, appealing for help. Suspecting that Morris was up to his old tricks, Inspector Richard Lane, who was also on the train, decides to watch him. In New York, Morris learns from Ann that her father had last telephoned her from the Arcade Building, where he had hidden the gems in a safe deposit box. Taking Ann to the home of Lloyd Corrigan, his friend, Morris instructs her to wait for his return. He goes to the Arcade Building to open the deposit box, only to have Lane arrest him for stealing the gems and murdering Baldwin. Lane opens the box and finds it empty. Meanwhile Al Hill and George McKay, Kendall's henchmen, who had come for the diamonds, watch this turn of events and become convinced that Morris had the diamonds. Morris escapes from Lane and returns to Corrigan's house. He finds that Ann had been kidnapped as hostage for the diamonds. Suspecting that Kendall had stolen the gems himself, and that he was trying to double-cross his henchmen, Morris secures some fake stones and goes to the night club. Through a keyhole, he sees Kendall hide the diamonds in his safe. After obtaining the real diamonds, Morris gives Kendall's men the fake stones for Ann's release. When Kendall arrives and informs his men that the gems were paste, Ann and Morris manage to escape. They meet Corrigan and Stone on the outside, and hide in a deserted areaway. Kendall's men discover them, and a fight ensues. The commotion is heard by Inspector Lane, who arrests Morris. Hill overhears Morris accuse Kendall of stealing the diamonds, and realizes that he had been double-crossed. He returns to the club and kills Kendall. Morris escapes from Lane again, and goes to the club where he finds Hill. By promising to take Hill to the hidden diamonds, Morris tricks him and turns him over to the police, thus clearing himself of all charges.

Howard J. Green wrote the screen play, Sam White produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"It Ain't Hay" with Abbott and Costello*(Universal, March 19; time, 81 min.)*

Although this is typical of the previous Abbott and Costello comedies, and the brand of humor expounded by this comedy team offers little that is new, their present popularity with the masses will undoubtedly put this picture over. The comedy routines and gags are, for the most part, familiar, but one cannot help chuckling, and even laughing out loud, at some of their antics. The story is based on Damon Runyon's "Princess O'Hara," but the resemblance to that story is remote. Worked into the proceedings are a number of songs, two of which are sung by Patsy O'Connor, an appealing youngster. The romantic interest between Grace McDonald and Leighton Noble is incidental. Interspersed are specialty song and dance numbers by the Vagabonds, Hollywood Blondes, and the Step Brothers:—

Lou Costello, a taxicab driver, has as a close friend Cecil Kellaway, a hansom cab driver. Costello's troubles begin when he feeds Kellaway's horse some candy, causing the horse to become ill and die. Costello is heartbroken; the loss of the horse had put Kellaway out of business. Spurred on by Bud Abbott, his non-paying passenger, Costello determines to replace Kellaway's horse. He learns from Shemp Howard, Eddie Quillan, and Dave Hacker, race track touts, that a horse by the name of Boimel, at the Empire Race Track, could be had for nothing. At the track, Abbott and Costello go to Boimel's stall, take the horse back to town, and give it to the jubilant Kellaway. The following day the boys learn that they had taken not Boimel, but Teabiscuit, a champion race horse. Samuel S. Hinds, the owner, had offered a ten thousand dollar reward for its return. The boys go in search of Kellaway, only to learn that he had taken a passenger to Saratoga. They follow him, retrieve the horse, and hide it in their hotel suite. Meanwhile the three race track touts learn of the horse's whereabouts. They ask Eugene Pallette, the hotel manager to aid them in securing the horse, promising to split the reward among the four of them. In an attempt to avert capture by the police, and black-mailing by the touts, Costello sneaks Teabiscuit out of the hotel and rides him away. The crooks ride after him. Costello and Teabiscuit head for the race track, arriving in time for the big race. Costello is tossed off Teabiscuit onto another horse, while a rival jockey rides Teabiscuit, whom he had mistaken for his original mount, to victory. Abbott, the only person on the track betting on Teabiscuit, wins a fortune.

Allen Boretz and John Grant wrote the screen play, Alex Gottlieb produced it, and Erle C. Kenton directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Falcon Strikes Back" with Tom Conway, Jane Randolph and Harriet Hilliard*(RKO, May 7; time, 62 min.)*

This first in the new "Falcon" series, starring Tom Conway, is satisfactory program fare. Although the story is typical of the pictures in the previous series, which starred George Sanders, it keeps one entertained. The action is lively, and it has a good sprinkling of comedy. Most of the excitement is concentrated in the closing scenes, when Conway solves the mystery and rounds up the criminals. There is a suggestion of a romance, but it is not culminated:—

Unable to resist the pleas of Rita Corday, who asks him to search for her wayward brother, Tom Conway accompanies her to a cocktail bar. There he is knocked unconscious by an unseen assailant. He awakes on the following morning to find himself accused of murdering a bank messenger and stealing a fortune in war bonds. Inspector Cliff Clark and Ed Gargan, his aide, scoff at Conway's explanations but they accompany him to the bar to check on his story. Conway is astonished to find that the bar was now a women's volunteer

headquarters. Wynne Gibson, the woman in charge, blandly insists that there had never been a bar there. With the aid of Cliff Edwards, his pal, and Jane Randolph, his girl-friend reporter, Conway escapes from the Inspector. Through Jane, he learns that Wynne lived in a swanky country hotel. Conway goes there to investigate, and meets Harriet Hilliard, manager of the resort; Edgar Kennedy, who ran a puppet show; Andre Charlot, a wealthy refugee; and Erford Gage, an ex-convict, who attended to Charlot's needs. He meets also Rita, but she is mysteriously killed by a bullet as he questions her. Conway learns that Charlot intended to invest a huge sum of money in war bonds through Harriet, who was in league with Wynne and Gage. But before Conway can act, the Inspector arrives and arrests him. Conway, however, eludes him, and returns to the hotel, where he forces a confession from Wynne, and learns that Harriet was an unwilling tool of the gang. Gage attempts to kill Conway, but like Rita, he is mysteriously shot. Conway cleverly proves that Kennedy, a one-time victim of the gang, had committed the murders. In a chase over the roof tops, Kennedy falls to his death.

Edward Dein and Gerald Geraghty wrote the screen play. Mr. Geraghty produced it, and Edward Dmytryk directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Air Raid Wardens" with Laurel and Hardy*(MGM, no release date set; time, 66 min.)*

Mediocre program fare. It is two reel stuff stretched into feature length. The story, though timely, is a hodge-podge of inane situations in which Laurel and Hardy, in their typical bungling manner, get themselves into all sorts of predicaments, bringing nothing but grief to their local Civilian Defense Organization. A spy angle is thrown in for good measure. The comedy, which is broad slapstick, may amuse the children and the ardent followers of Laurel and Hardy. Most adults, however, will find it boring:—

Laurel and Hardy close up their bicycle shop in the town of Huston, and leave to enlist in the army. But the army rejects them, and they return to town dejected. They decide to do their bit by becoming air raid wardens. Horace McNally, editor of the local paper and chief of Civilian Defense, welcomes the boys. But Howard Freeman, the town banker, and Nella Walker, his wife, disapprove of their entry into the newly-formed organization. The boys return to their shop where they find Edgar Kennedy, the local moving man, moving their bicycles out of the store, and bringing in radios belonging to Donald Meek, a newcomer in town. After much fuss, Meek and the boys agree to share the store. When McNally orders a test air raid alarm, Laurel and Hardy are ordered to bring in "casualties," bandage their imaginary wounds, and see to it that lights are out during the raid. Their first "casualty" is the banker. By the time they get through with him, the man requires hospitalization. Unaware that the all clear signal had been flashed, they next attempt to make Kennedy put out the lights in his house. Kennedy resents the intrusion and, after a battle, hits them with a whiskey bottle, knocking them both unconscious. Found in this condition, the boys are erroneously accused of drunkenness, and dismissed from the organization. One day the boys overhear Meek and a grim stranger plotting to sabotage the town's magnesium plant, on the night another test alarm was to take place. In a spectacular surprise move, they upset the plot and bring the air raid wardens to the plant where the saboteurs are captured. The boys are returned to their posts as air raid wardens, and are honored by the townspeople as heroes.

Martin Rackin, Jack Jevne, Charles Rogers, and Harry Crane wrote the screen play, B. F. Zeidman produced it, and Edward Sedgwick directed it. The cast includes Jacqueline White, Henry O'Neill, Russell Hicks, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Ladies Day" with Lupe Velez, Patsy Kelly, and Eddie Albert

(RKO, April 9; time, 62 min.)

For those who like their comedy rowdy, and sometimes bordering on slapstick, "Ladies Day," which deals with baseball from the women's angle, offers sufficient laughs; it will certainly satisfy as a supporting feature where something light is needed. Most of the comedy is provoked by the efforts of the players' wives to keep apart the team's pitching star and his bride; love had affected his game, thus endangering the team's chances of winning the pennant. As the bride, Lupe Velez performs in characteristic fashion—impetuous and uncontrollable. The action is fast:—

Whenever Eddie Albert, a star baseball pitcher, falls in love, it affects his pitching and causes his team to lose many games. Matters become worse when Albert marries Lupe Velez, a fiery Mexican actress. To help the team, Patsy Kelly and Iris Adrian, two of the players' wives, arrange for Lupe to go to Hollywood where she is starred in a picture. This keeps Lupe away from Albert long enough to help the team win the pennant. Her picture completed, Lupe telegraphs Albert that she is returning to him. Patsy and Iris waylay her in Kansas City, and keep her captive in a hotel room during the World Series. But she finally escapes and makes her way back to Albert just before the final and decisive game. Patsy and Iris contrive to keep her away from the ball park by having a fake doctor put her under quarantine. As the final game progresses, Albert pitches badly; his separation from Lupe had affected his playing. Meanwhile Lupe discovers the hoax and rushes to the ball park. Her presence inspires Albert, and he pitches the best game of his career, winning the World Series.

Charles E. Roberts and Dane Lussier wrote the screen play, Bert Gilroy produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it. The cast includes Max Baer, Jerome Cowan, Joan Barclay and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"This Land Is Mine" with Charles Laughton and Maureen O'Hara

(RKO, April 23; time, 103 min.)

Of the many pictures dealing with the subjugated people of Europe, "This Land Is Mine" ranks with the better ones. Although the story is not as logical as it might be, it is, nevertheless, a gripping drama of man's indomitable courage against tyrannical rule. The action revolves around a meek schoolmaster, who, dominated by his mother, and sneered at by his pupils, emerges as the town's greatest hero when, in a thrilling courtroom speech, he gains the courage to denounce those who collaborate with the Nazis, and encourage those who resist them. There are many situations with deep human appeal. The story lacks exciting action, but because of the fine direction and the artistic acting, one's interest is held all the way through. In many respects the subject matter is similar to other films released recently, but that may not hurt its box-office chances, because of its superior quality:—

Charles Laughton, timid and middle-aged teacher, pampered by Una O'Connor, his mother, lives in a small French town occupied by the Nazis, under the command of Major Walter Slezak. Aware of his shortcomings, Laughton does not have the courage to confess his love for Maureen O'Hara, a fellow teacher. As the Nazis tighten their grip, the town's citizens divide into two factions: Those like Mayor Thurston Hall and George Sanders, Maureen's fiancé, who find it profitable to "collaborate," and those like Professor Philip Merivale, the school principal, and Kent Smith, Maureen's brother, who continue to fight for freedom. One evening, invited to dinner by Maureen, Laughton is present when Smith, fleeing from the Nazis after having dynamited an ammunition train, returns home. Laughton helps Smith to establish an alibi by declaring that he had been home all evening. Unknown to all, Laughton's mother had seen Smith enter the house, and she realized that he was the unknown saboteur. Meanwhile Slezak arrests the pro-

fessor as the author of articles in an underground newspaper and, to quell further acts of sabotage, seizes hostages, including Laughton. To free her son, Laughton's mother informs Sanders about Smith. Sanders, peeved because Maureen had broken their engagement when she learned of his cooperation with the Nazis, notifies Slezak. A trap is set, and Smith is killed. Laughton is released. But Maureen, believing him to be the traitor, scorns him. Bewildered, Laughton confides in his mother, and learns that it was she who had betrayed Smith. Laughton rushes to Sanders' office, only to find that he had just committed suicide. Laughton is suspected of murder and is arrested. At the trial, Laughton pleads his own cause, and shows unexpected courage in denouncing his collaborationist countrymen. During a recess, Slezak, afraid of the consequences of free speech, offers Laughton his freedom as the price of silence. But Laughton cannot be bought. He makes a magnificent speech, urging his friends to continue their resistance. The jury acquits him. Realizing that his freedom will be short-lived, Laughton triumphantly returns to his pupils and reads them the "Rights of Man." When the Nazis arrest him, Maureen, who now realized his love, continues reading to the children.

Dudley Nichols wrote the screen play, and Jean Renoir directed it. Mr. Nichols and Mr. Renoir are the co-producers.

Morally suitable for all.

"I Walked With a Zombie" with Tom Conway, James Ellison and Frances Dee

(RKO, April 30; time, 69 min.)

Horror fans may find this picture to their taste in that it is fantastic, mysterious, and eerie, but most spectators will find the story unsatisfactory, for when it comes to an end it leaves one with the feeling that it is either incomplete or it had no point; it is best suited for the lower half of a double-bill. The story deals with the West Indies' superstition of "the walking dead," and of voodooism. The producer has made the most of the wierd theme; the atmosphere is quite eerie, and in some spots one is held in fairly tense suspense. But on the whole it leaves much to be desired. The film's morbid appeal makes it an unpleasant entertainment. The acting is ordinary:—

Frances Dee, a Canadian nurse, arrives in the West Indies to care for Christine Gordon, wife of Tom Conway, wealthy sugar-planter. Conway's wife had supposedly been stricken with a rare tropic fever, which left her unable to speak or feel, although she was able to walk. Frances learns that James Ellison, Conway's half-brother, had fallen in love with Christine, and planned to run off with her. Ellison blamed Conway for her condition. Edith Barrett, mother of the two men, spent her time with the natives, striving to better their lot. Sympathizing with Conway, Frances falls in love with him. For his sake, she resolves to nurse Christine back to normalcy. She induces Dr. James Bell to try insulin-shock treatments, but with no results. When native servants inform Frances that their voodoo priests can effect miraculous cures, she decides to take Christine to a voodoo temple. There Frances is astonished to find Conway's mother, and to learn that she is a power in the temple. The priests begin to try witchcraft on Christine and, alarmed, Frances takes her patient back to the house. The natives, aroused by Christine's visit, endeavor to bring her back to the temple. This comes to the attention of the authorities, who plan an investigation. To avoid this, Conway's mother confesses that she is responsible for Christine's condition; unwilling to let her sons' lives be disrupted, she had persuaded the voodoo priests to turn Christine into a "Zombie"—a person brought back from the dead to a robot-like existence. Half-crazed with the idea that Christine is really dead, Ellison kills her, then carries the body into the sea, drowning himself. The death of Ellison and Christine clears the way for Frances and Conway to marry.

Curt Siodmak and Ardel Wray wrote the screen play, Val Lewton produced it, and Jacques Tourneur directed it.

Adult entertainment.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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SATURDAY, MARCH 27, 1943

No. 13

Col. William Frederick Cody, U.S.A. (Buffalo Bill)

Harry Sherman, the well known producer of the Hopalong Cassidy series and of other worthwhile productions, has just announced that he has closed a deal with Twentieth Century-Fox by which he has undertaken to produce for that company the life of Colonel William Frederick Cody, more popularly known as Buffalo Bill. He will make it into an epic that will cost around one and one-half million dollars; it will be in Technicolor, and the part of Mr. Cody will be acted by Joel McCrea, a typical American.

Considering the times we are now going through, this writer believes that Harry Sherman could not have chosen a better subject by which to present to the people, not only of this country but also of the whole world, how this country was built to its present greatness, the marvel of the twentieth century in science as well as manufacture, thus offsetting the theory abroad, conveyed by vicious pictures, produced by thoughtless people, that this country is inhabited by nothing but gangsters. For this, Mr. Sherman deserves the thanks of the entire country in general, and of the theatre owners in particular.

The life of Buffalo Bill is most fascinating. More books have been written about his exploits than about the affairs of any other American with the exception of President Lincoln. Many Western historical personalities are known for their bravery, and many more for their badness, but Buffalo Bill is known for the service he had rendered to his country at a time when such services were needed.

It is difficult to imagine the development of our Western United States without connecting it with the services of Buffalo Bill. Before his days, the great expanse west of the Mississippi up to the Pacific Coast was known as the "Great American Desert"; today it is developed as highly as the eastern part of the country. And Buffalo Bill has been responsible for it more than any other single American.

As a boy, Buffalo Bill started as a Pony Express Rider. He became a great hunter. Later he became a scout for the Army, and his services proved so valuable that he was made Chief Scout. In that capacity he was greatly instrumental in the subduing of the savage Red Skins, thus bringing civilization to this "desert." He knew the Indians well, and was fearless. Any one who has read his biography realizes how fearless he was by the fact that he engaged in combat Yellowhand, the ferocious son of a Sioux Chief. And he came out a winner—he slew his adversary, but in a fair fight.

Buffalo Bill was so fair and so honest that the Indians themselves respected him even though he fought them. Short Bull, an Indian Chief, said of him when he heard of his death: "He never fought us except when we did wrong. And he was our friend even though he fought us. He killed us because we were bad and because we fought against what we knew was best for us."

Buffalo Bill was a great showman. And he loved children. There was hardly a time when he was not surrounded by them listening to his thrilling tales. And when he finished one tale they would ask him to tell them another. And he was always obliging.

One of his finest characteristics was his love for his mother. His first pay he spread before her and asked her to look at the gold and silver he had earned for her. And when he was on a dangerous mission, he made arrangements that his pay be given to his mother.

When Buffalo Bill married he was good to his wife. But grief overtook him when he lost his little son.

In accepting the offer of Mr. Sherman to make this great American epic, Twentieth Century-Fox has made a wise move, for Harry Sherman is best qualified to handle a subject of this kind. Not only is he one of the most experienced individual producers of Western epics, but he has the happy faculty of making actors, directors, technicians and others give him the best there is in them. He is Hollywood's best example of remembering the great artists of the past—he still retains the friendship of those who have known him. The spirited performances of the people in his pictures are but a reflection of his kindly qualities. He is the one person in Hollywood of whom every one else speaks well.

The exhibitors should rest assured that Harry Sherman will turn out an American epic that will make them proud to show.

ABRAM F. MYERS' COMMENTS ON THE COURT'S DECISION IN THE CRESCENT CIRCUIT CASE

Following is a release, sent out on March 17 by Abram F. Myers, chief counsel of Allied States Association:

"CRESCENT DECISION

"On March 3 Judge Davies of the United States District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee filed his decision in the Government's anti-trust suit against the Crescent Circuit.

"There was no opinion; only the findings of fact and conclusions of law required by the rules. These comprise 142 legal size pages. Because of the important effect which this decision should have on the future policy of the Department of Justice, particularly in reference to the Consent Decree, it seems desirable to summarize the findings and conclusions for the information of Allied members. Except for broad generalizations, these findings were ignored by the trade papers.

"The Crescent Case was one of four filed by the Government in 1938-1939 against combinations between distributors and circuits in the motion picture business. The main case, which sought to divorce the major companies from their theatre holdings, was settled (temporarily) by entry of the Consent Decree. The case against the Schine Circuit was terminated by a consent decree. The Griffith Case is still pending.

"When the Crescent suit was filed the Big Eight producer-distributors were named defendants. When the case was called for trial it was dismissed as to the five companies that had signed the Consent Decree. While this removed those distributors from the case, and put them beyond the power of the court, they nevertheless figured in the evidence. Their conduct was on trial even though they were absent. Judge Davies found that the exhibitor defendants 'have violated the Sherman Act by combining with each other, and with the major distributors, Paramount, Fox, Loew's, RKO and United Artists, in licensing films for the purpose and with the effect of maintaining their theatre monopolies and preventing independent theatres from competing with them.'

"Thus can these giants point at Sudekum and say, 'There, but for the grace of Harry Hopkins, Robert Jackson and Thurman Arnold, go we!'

(Continued on last page)

"Edge of Darkness" with Errol Flynn, Ann Sheridan and Walter Huston

(Warner Bros., April 24; time, 118 min.)

Excellent! Of the numerous films produced recently, dealing with Norway's struggle against the Nazi invader, none surpass, and few approach, this picture's powerful and grim depiction of the Nazis' ruthlessness and bestiality, and of the Norwegian people's dogged determination to resist oppression. It is the type of picture audiences will not forget soon, for its dramatic impact makes a deep impression on one. Lewis Milestone's direction is masterful, and the performances, from the stars to the bit players, are superb.

Briefly, the story deals with the organized resistance of the townspeople in a Norwegian town, and their engaging in an active sabotage campaign, which results in brutal retaliatory measures imposed by the commandant of the Nazi garrison. The populace seethes, but they are held in check by their leaders and are told to wait for the day that will find them sufficiently armed to risk open revolt. But the rape of a Norwegian girl by a Nazi soldier precipitates a bloody revolt, which completely wipes out the Nazi garrison, leaves but a few villagers alive, and makes a shambles of the town.

The picture's opening scenes are gruesome; they give evidence of the fight to the death when squads of soldiers enter the town and find it in ruins, with bodies of German soldiers and Norwegian citizens strewn everywhere. By means of flashback, the story leading up to this carnage unfolds.

It is the graphic portrayals by the cast that gives this film its dramatic force. Errol Flynn, as a local fisherman and stalwart leader of the "underground," and Ann Sheridan, as his sweetheart and spirited aide, turn in inspired performances. Other outstanding characterizations are enacted by Walter Huston, as Ann's father and village doctor, who, torn by an inner conflict over whether to submit to the Nazis or fight back, kills the first Nazi soldier he encounters soon after learning of Ann's defilement; John Beal, Ann's brother, who turns "Quisling" and lives in the Nazi barracks in fear of the villagers; Ruth Gordon, as Ann's mother, a simple, unworldly woman, devoted to her family and unable to grasp the full meaning of their plight; Charles Dingle, as Ann's uncle, wealthiest man in town and a Nazi collaborator, who becomes insane after the revolt and is shot by the investigating soldiers; Helmut Dantine, as the ruthless Nazi commandant, who commits suicide when his men fail to halt the revolt; Nancy Coleman, Dantine's Polish mistress, who is shot by him when she denounces the Nazis at the height of the revolt; Morris Carnovsky, as the elderly schoolteacher, who is beaten and mauled in the village square when he protests against the oppression; Richard Fraser, as the pastor, who interrupts the execution of the "underground" leaders by shooting down the executioners from the church belfry; Judith Anderson, as the widowed hotel keeper and "underground" leader—all make their roles memorable.

It is a stark, gripping drama, highly emotional and extremely realistic. The action thrills and excites one, but it is much too grim to be classed as entertainment for children. The production values are excellent.

Robert Rossen wrote the screen play, Henry Blanke produced it, and Lewis Milestone directed it. The cast includes Tom Fadden, Roman Bohnen, Helene Thimig, Monte Blue, Tonio Selwart and others.

"Clancy Street Boys" with Noah Beery, Sr., and the East Side Kids

(Monogram, April 23; time, 65 min.)

Augmented by a better than usual supporting cast, this latest of the "East Side Kid" program melodramas is entertaining; it will certainly please the followers of the series. What it lacks in novelty of plot is made up for by the humorous antics of the "Kids." The best part of the comedy is provoked by Huntz Hall's impersonation of a girl. The action is fast and, as is usual, the picture ends in a rousing battle, with the "Kids" subduing the criminal element:—

Rancher Noah Beery, Sr., and Lita Ward, his daughter, arrive in New York to visit Leo Gorcey and Marta Wentworth, Gorcey's mother. Gorcey's father, before he died, had told Beery that he had seven children, six boys and a girl. Actually, Gorcey was Miss Wentworth's only child, and she was in a dilemma because Beery had been sending checks each year to the children for birthdays and Christmas. To help his mother out of an embarrassing position, Gorcey decides to continue with the deception. He enlists the aid of his pals who impersonate the necessary children, with Huntz Hall playing the part of Gorcey's sister. The "Kids" visit Beery and Lita at their hotel, and he takes them out and buys them new clothes. That evening, he takes them to dinner at a night club. There, Rick Vallin, a gangster, who was acquainted with the "Kids," learns that they were hood-

winking Beery. The following day Vallin contacts Beery and offers to prove that the "Kids" were fooling him. He takes Beery to Gorcey's home where he learns the truth. Beery informs Miss Wentworth that he will have nothing more to do with her. Gorcey goes to the hotel to apologize to Beery, only to learn from Lita that Beery had gone out the night before with Vallin, and that he did not come back to the hotel. At that moment Vallin telephones and informs Lita that Beery had met with an accident, and that he was sending someone to the hotel to bring her to him. Realizing that Vallin was attempting to extort money from Beery, Gorcey tells Lita to go, and arranges with Bobby Jordan to follow the car that calls for her. When Jordan telephones the address of the hideout, Gorcey rounds up his gang and secures the release of Beery and Lita. Vallin and his gang are arrested, and Beery forgives the boys.

Harvey Gates wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman and Barney Sarecky produced it, and William Beaudine directed it. The cast includes J. Farrell MacDonald, Bennie Bartlett, Dick Chandler, Sammy Morrison, Eddie Mills and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"At Dawn We Die" with John Clements, Godfrey Tearle and Hugh Sinclair

(Republic, March 20; time, 78 min.)

A fairly good British-made war melodrama; it should satisfy American audiences. The film, which was made with the collaboration of the Free French movement in London, revolves around the "underground" activities of a group of French patriots in a Nazi-occupied town in Brittany. Some of the situations are a bit far-fetched, but since the action is kept moving at a steady pace, and the performances are engaging, one's interest is held throughout. One is sympathetic to the heroine, who, in order to conceal her secret leadership of the "underground," openly consorts with the Nazi commandant, thus gaining the contempt of the townspeople, none of whom knew of her true purpose. It has considerable human interest, and some of the action is fairly exciting. The French backgrounds are realistic:—

John Clements, a carefree young Frenchman, who seeks to escape to England with valuable military information he had obtained, comes to a small Brittany town where he joins an "underground" movement, few members of which knew the identity of their leader. Among the town's Nazi supporters are Mayor Godfrey Tearle and Greta Gynt, his daughter, to whom Clements is attracted. When Greta shows a preference for the Nazi commandant, Clements turns to Judy Kelly, a waitress, for consolation. Unknown to Clements, Judy was an informer. Judy accidentally discovers the "underground's" hide-out, and notifies the Nazi commandant. While waiting for his arrival, she is horrified to see Clements, with whom she had fallen in love, enter the hide-out. When the commandant appears, Judy kills him to safeguard Clements. The Gestapo arrests fifty hostages, including the Mayor, and threatens to execute them unless the "underground's" leader surrenders. Terrified for her own safety, Judy implicates Greta as the leader, and an investigation proves this to be true. Judy, repentant, tries to warn Greta, but is unsuccessful. With Clements' aid, Greta eludes the Nazis. Clements seeks to have himself declared as the leader, thus saving the lives of the hostages, but the Mayor rejects the idea, declaring that such an act would please the Nazis and break the spirit of the French people. The hostages, inspired, willingly go to their deaths. Clements and Greta are intercepted by the Gestapo as they leave the town through an underground water route, but, before they can be taken into custody, the town is raided by the RAF, and they make their escape to England in the confusion.

Anatole de Grunwald wrote the screen play, John Stafford and S. W. Smith produced it, and George King directed it. Adult entertainment.

"Aerial Gunner" with Chester Morris and Richard Arlen

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 78 min.)

Filmed against the background of the Harlingen Army Gunnery School in Texas, this action melodrama is good program fare. In spite of the fact that the story lacks novelty, it should appeal to the regular picture-goer, for the action moves at a pretty fast and at times exciting pace. It is particularly thrilling toward the finish, where Chester Morris sacrifices his life covering the escape of a downed bomber in Japanese-held territory. The story is the familiar one of two men, enemies in civilian life, who maintain their enmity during their training period, only to become staunch buddies on the battlefield. Throughout the action is shown the methods employed in the training of aerial gunners.

There is the usual romance, with both men vying for the love of the girl:—

Chester Morris, instructor at an aerial gunnery school, tries to use his authority to avenge himself against Richard Arlen, who was under his command; Morris' father, an ex-convict, had committed suicide after Arlen, a detective in civilian life, had brought him in for questioning. Morris scorns Arlen's attempts at friendship. Jimmy Lydon, one of the trainees, invites both Morris and Arlen to spend the week-end at his family's ranch. There they meet Lita Ward, Lydon's sister. Both fall in love with her, but Lita shows a preference for Morris. In an attempt to hurt Arlen's chances of graduation, Morris deliberately speeds up a moving target, which ran on a railroad track. But before he can jump off, Morris trips and falls unconscious on the runaway target. With the aid of an army "jeep," Arlen saves Morris' life in a daring rescue. Morris does not show his gratitude. On the day of the final tests—shooting at a moving target from a plane—all but Lydon pass; he had lost his nerve while in the air. Morris persuades him to try again. Lydon loses control of his gun, and shoots off the rudder on his plane. He dies in the crash, and Lita blames Morris for his death. Months later, Arlen, now a flight commander in a South Pacific base, finds that Morris had been assigned to his squadron. Morris is surprised at the fair treatment given him by Arlen, and changes his attitude toward him. After raiding a Japanese base, Arlen's plane is attacked by Jap Zeros and forced down in a field. When a Japanese patrol attempts to capture the plane, Morris holds them off with a machine gun, while Dick Purcell, the mechanic, makes emergency repairs. Wounded, Arlen was unable to help. The plane gets into the air, but Morris sacrifices his life covering the take-off.

Maxwell Shane wrote the screen play, and William Pine and William Thomas produced it. Mr. Pine directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"China" with Alan Ladd, Loretta Young and William Bendix

(Paramount, release date not set; time, 78 min.)

A fairly good war melodrama, in which the struggle of the Chinese against Japanese aggression is depicted through the adventures of a calloused American oil man, whose neutral attitude changes quickly when he comes face to face with Japanese atrocities. Although some of the situations are far-fetched, the action is thrilling and suspenseful. There is considerable human interest in Miss Young's devotion to a group of Chinese girl-students, and her efforts to get them to a place of safety. William Bendix's attachment to a Chinese baby he had rescued is appealing. The backgrounds and photography are exceptionally good. The popularity of Alan Ladd should be of considerable help at the box-office. The action takes place prior to Pearl Harbor:—

Alan Ladd, tough American oil dealer in China, sells oil to both the Chinese and Japanese, refusing to take sides in their war. While on his way to Shanghai, with William Bendix, his helper, Ladd's truck is commandeered by Loretta Young, an American teacher, who asks him to transport twenty girl-students to a place of safety. Protesting that this "isn't his war," Ladd refuses. But Sen Yung, Loretta's aide, brandishes a pistol and compels him to follow Loretta's orders. The party stops at a farm, owned by the parents of Marianne Quon, one of the students, so that they might obtain milk for a Chinese baby Bendix had rescued in a raid. While the others refresh themselves, Loretta tries to win Ladd over to the Chinese cause. He insists upon remaining neutral. The baby is left at the farm, and the party continues the journey. A Jap plane swoops down and attacks the truck, but it is shot down by Chinese guerrillas, who inform Ladd that a Japanese column was approaching the area. Meanwhile Loretta discovers that, soon after leaving the farm, Marianne had slipped off the truck to return to her parents. Knowing the fate of a Chinese girl in Japanese hands, Loretta and Ladd speed back to the farm. They find the farm in flames, and Marianne's parents and the baby murdered. Hearing screams, Ladd rushes into the house where he finds three Japanese soldier's; Marianne had been raped. Ladd shoots down the offenders. When Marianne dies of her injuries, Ladd has a change of heart. He joins the guerrillas in a daring raid on a Japanese construction camp to obtain explosives, needed to blast a cliff over the only road the Japanese division can travel. In order that the entire division be caught in the ravine, Ladd boldly stops the leading car, occupied by a Jap general, and engages him in conversation. At a signal from Ladd, the cliff is blown up and, together with the Japanese, he loses his life in the avalanche.

Frank Butler wrote the screen play, Richard Blumenthal produced it, and John Farrow directed it. The cast includes Philip Ahn, Richard Loo and others. Adult entertainment.

"Salute for Three" with Macdonald Carey and Betty Rhodes

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 78 min.)

A trite plot, and unimaginative treatment, makes this comedy with music just ordinary program entertainment, mostly on the dull side. The performances are nothing to brag about, but one can hardly blame the players; they are hampered by mediocre material. Most patrons will welcome the musical interpolations, which are of the popular variety, but none of these are particularly impressive. A comic dance specialty number by Lorraine and Rognan is an outstanding feature. None of the comedy situations provoke more than a grin. The production values are good:—

When Sergeant Macdonald Carey returns from the South Pacific a hero, Marty May, press agent, decides to use him as means for gaining wide publicity for Betty Rhodes, a singer. May had been unsuccessful in his attempts to obtain a radio contract for her, because she was unknown. Betty, who was in love with May, reluctantly agrees to the plan. She meets Carey at a service men's canteen, and succeeds in gaining his attentions. May encourages the romance and, before long, Carey falls madly in love with Betty, and asks her to marry him. May sees to it that the romance is given wide publicity, and secures a radio contract for Betty. Meanwhile May finds that his scheme had boomeranged; Betty had fallen in love with Carey. To be fair with Carey, Betty decides to inform him that the romance was originally planned as a publicity stunt. But before she can speak to him, Dona Drake, leader of the canteen's girl band, gives this news to Carey. Peeved, Carey refuses to listen to Betty's explanations, and breaks their engagement. Realizing that Betty was heartbroken, and that she was desperately in love with Carey, May patches up the romance, and graciously steps out of Betty's romantic life.

Doris Anderson, Curtis Kenyon, Hugh Wedlock, Jr., and Howard Snyder wrote the screen play, Walter MacEwen produced it, and Ralph Murphy directed it. The cast includes Cliff Edwards, Minna Gombell, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"High Explosive" with Chester Morris, Jean Parker and Barry Sullivan

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

Fairly good program fare. It is another in the Pine-Thomas series of action melodramas, and it should prove to be an acceptable supporting feature in most situations, with a particular appeal to the action-minded patrons. Although the story is ordinary, it holds one's attention to a fair degree, because of the fast action and the numerous thrills. One is held in tense suspense in the closing situations where Chester Morris, flying a plane loaded with nitro-glycerine, is unable to land because of the fog. There is a romance, but it has little appeal:—

In need of truck drivers to help transport explosives, Barry Sullivan, owner of a nitro-glycerine plant, urges Chester Morris, his friend, to give up midget-car racing, and to return in his employ. Morris declines. When Rand Brooks, brother of Jean Parker, Sullivan's secretary, applies to Sullivan for a job, Jean objects because of the job's dangerous nature. But Brooks pleads that he needs the money to marry Barbara Lynn. Jean agrees. Meanwhile Morris is ruled off the race tracks, and he accepts employment with Sullivan's firm. He loses no time in trying to date Jean. Morris takes Brooks under his wing and teaches him the art of handling explosives. The boy becomes an expert driver. On a night that Jean agrees to a date with him, Morris is assigned to blow out a fire in an oil well. Sullivan instructs Morris to take Brooks along, but not to allow the boy to handle the explosives. Morris disregards the orders, and Brooks narrowly misses death, because of a leaky nitro-glycerine can. Jean overhears Sullivan reprimand Morris for the incident, and refuses to keep her date with him. Morris takes Brooks' girl-friend for a plane ride to make Jean jealous. Because of Morris' absence, Brooks is compelled to make an extra delivery. He has an accident and is killed. Jean blames Morris. As Morris prepares to quit, word comes of an oil well fire that threatened a munitions plant. Sullivan and Morris load the nitro-glycerine on a plane and fly to the fire. But a heavy fog makes it impossible for them to land. His gas supply exhausted, and realizing that a forced landing will blow up the plane, Morris tricks Sullivan into bailing out of the plane to safety. He heads the plane directly into the flaming oil well, blows out the fire, and saves the munitions factory at the cost of his life.

Maxwell Shane and Howard J. Green wrote the screen play, William H. Pine and William C. Thomas produced it, and Frank MacDonald directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"FOUNDATION OF THE MONOPOLY"

"The findings set forth in detail the acquisitions of theatres by Crescent and its affiliated companies. The company names (in addition to Crescent) to be remembered are: Muscle Shoals Theatres, Inc., Cumberland Amusement Co., Rockwood Amusement Co., and Cherokee Amusements, Inc. Many other subsidiary companies are mentioned, but these are the ones found guilty of violating the Sherman Act. The individuals held guilty are Anthony Sudekum, president of Crescent, Kermit G. Stengel (his son-in-law) and Louis Rosenbaum (co-partner with Mrs. Sudekum in Muscle Shoals, a Sudekum-dominated concern).

"The buying power of the Sudekum interests, in the territory in which they operate, enabled them to 'coerce' distributors and to drive out independent competitors. Their holdings are shown in the following summary:

"On August 11, 1934, the defendant exhibitors and their affiliates operated in thirty-two towns in Tennessee (excluding Nashville), Kentucky, and Alabama, in six of which they had competition. On August 11, 1939, the defendant exhibitors and their affiliates, with the exception of Strand, heretofore dismissed as a defendant, operated in seventy-eight towns in Tennessee (excluding Nashville), Kentucky, Alabama, and North Carolina, in five of which they had competition, and the only towns in which they have competition today outside of Nashville, are Gadsden, Alabama, Harriman, Gallatin and McMinnville, Tennessee, and Franklin, Kentucky. In two of these towns—Gadsden, Alabama, and Harriman, Tennessee, the independent theatres have opened since the filing of this suit and two more—Franklin, Kentucky, and Gallatin, Tennessee—are towns which Crescent entered less than two years before the filing of this suit.

"Of the forty-five towns in Tennessee listed in the 1940 census as having populations between 2,500 and 10,000, Crescent and its affiliates now operate theatres in all but nine. The independents operating in three of those nine towns have already been approached by Sudekum emissaries with the suggestion that they sell to one of the defendant exhibitors. (Finding B-23, p. 14.)"

"Concert of action between Crescent and its affiliates in buying or not buying the products of particular distributors was established by numerous instances. (C-31-34, pp. 20-23.) The evidence showed a complete unity between the affiliated companies and their absolute domination by Sudekum. (C-35-37, pp. 23-26.)"

"ELIMINATING COMPETITION"

"The findings set forth in great detail how competition just was eliminated by the acquisition of competing theatres. Some of the transactions appear to have been without coercion, although fear may have been the underlying motive so far as the competitors were concerned. Whenever Crescent bought out a competitor it required that the seller agree not to further compete with Crescent or its affiliates. Some of those agreements extended far beyond the protection of the business being sold and demonstrated a clear intention to monopolize theatre operation wherever they or their affiliates secured a foothold." (C-30, p. 20.)

"The findings in reference to the use made of their buying power in inducing distributors to sell away from competitors, are amazing. There are findings to the effect that certain distributors showed a disposition to discriminate in favor of Sudekum not justified by his buying power. However that may have been, the result was always the same. Sudekum got the product and the competitor did not.

"THE CASE OF LAWING"

"Too many cases are involved and the findings are too lengthy to attempt a complete summary. A single case will serve as an illustration:

"One Lawing had operated the Southland Theatre in Brownsville, Tennessee, on a 15c and 25c admission policy. In the summer of 1935 Crescent opened the Capitol Theatre in Brownsville on a 10c and 15c policy.

"Thereupon Lawing opened a tent show in Paris, Tennessee, a Crescent town. He continued to operate this until November, 1935, when he converted a building in Paris into the Gem Theatre.

"Crescent did not license Paramount product for 1934-1935 and so Lawing was able to get this first run in Paris.

He was given no opportunity to license Paramount for 1935-1936, however, and on August 22, 1935, Paramount licensed that season's product to Crescent for exhibition in Paris and 18 other towns.

"Lawing got the Fox 1935-1936 product first run in Paris. This was because Crescent broke with Fox in the fall of 1935 on the 1935-1936 product. In the spring of 1936 Crescent and Fox got together on a 3-year deal for the entire circuit.

"In addition to the Paramount and Fox product, Lawing had been able to spotbook a few RKO pictures for Paris.

"He was unable to secure any other major product, nor would any of the distributors sell him a second-run. But Crescent was allowed to repeat pictures played by Lawing in Brownsville, a much smaller town.

"Getting back to Brownsville, Lawing played Paramount's 1934-1935 product in the Southland Theatre. He applied to Paramount for the 1935-1936 product and was told they could not negotiate for Brownsville at that time. Later Paramount licensed to Crescent as a part of the 19-town deal above mentioned.

"Lawing also played Warner's 1934-1935 product at the Southland. Early in 1935 he attempted on several occasions to open negotiations for Warner's 1935-1936 program. The exchange manager and a salesman refused to discuss a deal with him. One of them told him their hands were tied in any situation that Crescent had gone into. Crescent got the product.

"Lawing was successful in renewing his deal with Fox before Crescent could buy the product away from him.

"The most flagrant disregard of the rights of an old customer, and the worst trucking to the circuit, was shown by Loew's. Lawing had played Loew's pictures every season from the time he opened the Southland until the 1935-1936 season. He played all but 5 of the features released by Loew's between September 1, 1932 and August 31, 1933, and every feature released between September 1, 1933 and August 31, 1934, except 1, which he paid for but did not play.

"In the spring of 1935 Lawing spoke to Willingham, branch manager at Memphis, and Mock, salesman, about Loew's product for 1935-1936. They said they would have to receive permission from New York. They finally took his application in July. It was returned, unapproved, on December 5, 1935. On December 26 Loew's licensed its 1935-1936 product to Crescent for first run Brownsville. At about the same time Loew's licensed that season's product to Crescent for exhibition in 16 other towns.

"HOW HE WAS BETRAYED"

"This black chapter in the history of Loew's began on April 3, 1935 when Sudekum told Avey, Loew's Atlanta branch manager, that he wanted the product for Brownsville. Prior to July 2 the Crescent booker told Willingham that Sudekum wanted Loew's to hold its 1935-1936 product for the new Crescent Theatre in Brownsville. It was because of this that Willingham refrained from negotiating with Lawing until July. Early in July Kessnich, southern district manager, directed Willingham to sell the product to Lawing. Willingham recommended acceptance of Lawing's application to Tom Connors, Loew's eastern sales manager. In his letter to Connors Willingham said:

"... Mr. Lawing has been buying our products for years and Mr. Sudekum came into his town and built an opposition house. Inasmuch as he was in the town first and has always played our product, we believe it is nothing but right that we continue to serve him. However, I wish to go on record now that if anything comes up with reference to selling the balance of the Sudekum towns that I will not be held responsible for the selling of this contract."

"On August 20 Postman, Loew's contract clerk in New York, wrote Willingham returning Lawing's application, suggesting that he hold it until they learned whether a deal would be made with Crescent. On December 5, the day Lawing's application was rejected, Willingham wrote Sudekum that inasmuch as they had sold away from their old customer in Brownsville, in order to give the product to Crescent, they deserved to have Loew's pictures played in all Crescent towns."

(To be continued next week)

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OVER FEEDING THE PUBLIC WITH PICTURES OF SIMILAR WAR THEMES

Included among the pictures tradeshow or previewed within recent weeks are MGM's "Assignment in Brittany"; RKO's "This Land Is Mine"; Republic's "At Dawn We Die"; Fox's "The Moon Is Down," "Chetniks," and "Tonight We Raid Calais"; United Artists' "Hangmen Also Die"; Warner Bros.' "Edge of Darkness"; and Paramount's "China." Some of these pictures are already in release, while the others will be shortly.

All these pictures are based on a variation of the same theme—the valiant struggle of the conquered peoples against the Axis invaders. Most of them are good productions, worthy of extensive exploitation. But no matter how fine a job is done on this exploitation, the fact still remains that there is a limit to how much of the same thing the motion picture public is willing to absorb.

By releasing within a short time of each other pictures based on the same theme, the distributors, as well as the exhibitors, cannot hope to derive the box-office results expected normally of these productions; after seeing two or more of these pictures within a few visits to the theatre, many patrons will have had their fill, and they will then make it a point to shun war pictures—even the outstanding ones.

Lest the public's resistance to these films manifest itself through decreased box-office receipts, the wise exhibitor will exercise the utmost care in allowing sufficient time to elapse between bookings, making it a point to exhibit in the interim such films as contain other than war themes.

Under such a policy the exhibitor will find that his patrons, who, both in the home and in business, are confronted daily with the problems of war, will look upon his theatre as a place of amusement, and not as a place that will remind him constantly of that which he seeks to forget for a few hours—war.

Instead of competing with films similar in theme, the distributors would do well to stagger their release dates so that there will be neither conflict nor competition, thus enabling themselves, as well as the exhibitors, to get the most out of each production. Moreover, the public will not be surfeited.

ABRAM F. MYERS' COMMENTS ON THE COURT'S DECISION IN THE CRESCENT CIRCUIT CASE

(Continued from last week)

"CONNORS TAKES THE STAND

"Connors took the stand for the defendants and undertook to explain this sell-away. His testimony was subjected to a merciless analysis by Judge Davies. When asked why he overruled Willingham's recommendation that the product be sold to Lawing, Connors said Willingham had advised him that Lawing claimed he could not pay as much for the 1935-1936 product as he had previously been paying, and that Lawing's application called for less money than he felt the product was worth in Brownsville. But found Judge Davies—

" 'This could not possibly have been Connors' reason for rejecting Lawing's application . . . because, 1st, there is nothing to show Connors ever told anyone Lawing's offer was inadequate, and, 2nd, Lawing's offer, as a matter of

fact, was as good as, if not better than, the deal Loew's accepted from Crescent.' "

"Connors further explained that he knew that Lawing's theatre was not as modern as the new Crescent theatre, and he felt that Metro could get more money from the new theatre. Commented Judge Davies:

" 'This was also an afterthought, as there is no suggestion in the voluminous correspondence regarding this situation . . . that the relative merits of the theatres entered into his decision, nor was there any necessity for Connors to speculate about what he could get from the two theatres because he had both offers before him. . . . '

"The lengths to which distribution executives are willing to go in attempting to justify these brutal sell-aways revives the old question whether distributors grant special favors to the circuits because they fear them or because they really want these territorial monopolies built up with a view to eventually acquiring them.

"Crescent eliminated all theatre competition in both Paris and Brownsville by acquiring Lawing's theatres in both towns in April, 1936. Immediately thereafter Crescent closed both theatres. (Finding C-38-46, pp. 26-32.)

"Judge Davies went into numerous other cases with the same thoroughness displayed in the Lawing Case. He also analyzed fully the existing franchises between Crescent and its affiliates and Paramount, Fox and Warners and the effect thereof on competitors. These findings should remind forgetful exhibitors of the monopolistic methods employed by the big circuits, both affiliated and unaffiliated, until the Department of Justice called a halt in 1938. It will remind them what they may expect in the future if the major companies succeed in their efforts either to induce the Administration to drop the pending prosecutions or to continue postponing them until all the witnesses are dead and the documentary evidence is stale. Exhibitors having private suits involving unfair circuit competition should study these findings as they contain many helpful ideas for properly preparing and trying their cases.

"GUILTY AS CHARGED

"Omitting the formal conclusions as to jurisdiction and the effect of defendants' activities on interstate commerce, and the findings that the charges have not been sustained as to Columbia, Universal, Strand Enterprises and R. E. Baulch (another son-in-law of Sudekum), the remainder of Judge Davies' conclusions are as set forth hereunder. The exact text is given so that quotations may be safely made.

" '9. Each of the defendants, Crescent Amusement Company, Inc., Muscle Shoals Theatres, Rockwood Amusements, Inc., Cumberland Amusement Company and Cherokee Amusements, Inc., has violated the Sherman Act in the following manner:

" 'A. Creating and maintaining an unreasonable monopoly of the business of operating theatres in the towns of Tennessee, Northern Alabama, and Central and Western Kentucky, in which each has theatres.

" 'B. Combining its closed towns with its competitive situations in licensing films for the purpose and with the effect of compelling the major distributors to license films on a non-competitive basis in competitive situations and to discriminate against its independent competitors in licensing films.

" 'C. Coercing or attempting to coerce independent operators into selling out to it, or to abandon plans to compete with it by predatory practices.

(Continued on last page)

"Tahiti Honey" with Simone Simon and Dennis O'Keefe

(Republic, April 6; time, 69 min.)

An amusing comedy with music. Although there is nothing novel either in the story or the treatment, it should serve fairly well as a second feature, for it unfolds in a breezy manner and has pleasant musical numbers. The comedy, which is provoked by Dennis O'Keefe's efforts to keep a girl-singer with his band, despite the objections of the band's members, is pretty good in spots; but the story lacks human appeal, and the action of the characters do not awaken one's sympathy. The music, which is of the popular variety, is interpolated in a natural way without retarding the action:—

Dennis O'Keefe, leader of the "Brooklyn Bombshells," a second-rate dance band, stranded in Tahiti, promises Simone Simon, a French-American singer, that he will take her to the United States if she will join the band. Heretofore the members of the band had regarded girl-singers as bad luck, but, needing one to "glamorize" the band, they agree to take her in. They insist, however, that she be left behind when they raise enough money to return to the United States. Meanwhile O'Keefe falls in love with Simone and, when the boys prepare to catch a boat, he trumps up a touching story about Simone's romance with "Charley," a mythical Navy Lieutenant, who was supposedly waiting in the States to marry her. The boys consent to her accompanying them. After reaching the United States, the boys have a streak of hard luck, which they attribute to Simone. When they demand to know why "Charley" does not come to claim his bride, O'Keefe puts them off by informing them that "Charley" had been transferred. To prove to the band that she was not their jinx, Simone persuades them to change their style of music. The band becomes successful. Through a coincidence, one of the boys mistake Lieutenant Michael Whalen for "Charley." Simone, rather than expose the fact that "Charley" was a product of O'Keefe's imagination, persuades Whalen to continue the deception. Whalen obligingly acts attentive to Simone, and eventually falls in love with her. O'Keefe becomes insanely jealous. Each man, believing that Simone loved the other, gallantly offers to relinquish her. Thinking that neither of them care for her, Simone gives them up. But she soon realizes her love for O'Keefe, and reunites with him.

Lawrence Kimble, Frederick Kohner, and W. H. Hanemann wrote the screen play. John R. Auer produced and directed it. The cast includes Lionel Stander, Wally Vernon, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Tonight We Raid Calais" with John Sutton and Annabella

(20th Century-Fox, no release date set; time, 70 min.)

A routine program war melodrama, which, despite the familiarity of the plot, should prove acceptable entertainment for the action fans. The story, which deals with the exploits of a lone British Commando in Nazi-occupied France, and with the resistance of French patriots against the Nazis, lacks originality of treatment. Nevertheless, the action is fast and exciting, and some of the situations are thrilling. Most of the excitement occurs in the closing situations where Annabella helps John Sutton to escape from the Nazis, and assists him in wrecking a munitions plant. There is considerable human appeal, but no comedy relief. Unlike the title suggests, there is no raid on Calais:—

When British Intelligence learns of the location of a munitions factory in Nazi-occupied France, Commando John Sutton is dispatched on a one-man raid to prepare for the destruction of the factory. After making his way to a village near the factory, Sutton enlists the aid of Lee J. Cobb, a patriotic farmer, despite the objections of Annabella, Cobb's young daughter. Believing that the British were responsible for the fall of France, Annabella hated all Britishers. Moreover, her brother had been killed by the

British at Oran. Aided by the villagers, Sutton poses as Cobb's son, and lives with the family. Annabella softens in her attitude toward him, but, in spite of the fact that she admires him, cannot bring herself to aid in the plan to destroy the factory; she feared Nazi reprisals. On the night set for the British bombers to blast the factory, guided by fires to be ignited by the local farmers, the Nazis learn of Sutton's identity and arrest Annabella's parents for harboring him. Promised that her parents will be spared, Annabella turns informer and helps the Nazis to capture Sutton. Richard Derr, the Nazi commandant, executes Annabella's parents, in spite of the fact that he had promised to release them. Aroused at the Nazis' ruthlessness, Annabella, through a daring ruse, helps Sutton to escape. Together they set the fires that guide the British planes to the factory. His mission completed, Sutton returns to England. But Annabella remains behind to help the French continue their resistance.

Waldo Salt wrote the screen play, Andre Daven produced it, and John Brahm directed it. The cast includes Beulah Bondi, Blanche Yurka, Howard Da Silva, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Sherlock Holmes in Washington" with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce

(Universal, April 30; time, 70 min.)

Suitable program fare. Although somewhat far-fetched, this third in the series of modernized "Sherlock Holmes" detective melodramas should easily satisfy the followers of such type of entertainment. This time the master sleuth visits Washington where, with his amazing powers of deduction, he locates a lost state document of vital importance, and prevents its theft by enemy agents. The fact that the audience knows from the beginning in whose possession the document is, gives the story a nice twist. One's interest, therefore, is held in watching the methods employed by "Holmes" to find it. Basil Rathbone gives his usual good portrayal of "Holmes," and Nigel Bruce, as "Dr. Watson," his aide, provokes many laughs with bright bits of dialogue:—

Sherlock Holmes (Basil Rathbone) and Dr. Watson (Nigel Bruce) fly to Washington to solve the disappearance of an important document, which had been stolen by spies from a British operative, who had mysteriously vanished after the theft. Holmes learns that, before leaving England, the operative had photographed the document on microfilm, and had inserted the negative within the cover of a folding match book. Holmes' investigation discloses that the agent had vanished soon after leaving a New York-to-Washington train, and that, without revealing its importance, he had casually given Nancy Partridge (Marjorie Lord), a fellow passenger, the match book. When the operative is found murdered, Holmes deduces that he had not revealed the whereabouts of the document. Meanwhile the spies, still hunting for the document, narrow down their search to Nancy and Senator Thurston Hall, the only persons to whom the operative might have given the document. Learning that Nancy was to be present at a reception in her honor, the spies go there and kidnap her. Holmes' search for the girl leads him to the antique shop of William Stanley (George Zucco), an enemy agent. Stanley had come into possession of the match book, but had no idea that it contained the photographed document. Holmes is made Stanley's prisoner, but he, together with Nancy, gains freedom with the arrival of the police led by Dr. Watson. After a gun battle, Stanley escapes. Holmes gives chase, and locates him in the office of Senator Hall, where he had gone in search of the document. As Stanley is led away by the police, Holmes asks him for a match. Handed the book of matches, Holmes slits open the cover and removes the microfilm.

Bertram Milhauser and Lynn Riggs wrote the screen play, Howard Benedict produced it, and Roy William Neill directed it. The cast includes John Arher, Don Terry, Edmund MacDonald, Bradley Page, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Alibi" with Margaret Lockwood and Hugh Sinclair

(Republic, March 24; time, 66 min.)

This British-made melodrama is fair program entertainment. Although the action lacks thrills, it holds one's interest to a fair degree, because of the story's developments. The action revolves around a young cafe hostess, who unwittingly implicates herself in a murder case when she provides an alibi for the killer. One is sympathetic to the heroine, whose fear of the murderer causes her to behave in a manner contrary to her character. Since one is aware of the murderer's identity from the beginning, the interest lies in the methods employed by the police to prove his guilt. The comedy relief is negligible, and the romantic interest is mildly pleasant. The production values are good:—

A popular act in a Paris cafe is that of Raymond Lovell, a mystic, who astounds the patrons with his powers. Hartley Power, a guest, becomes agitated and rushes from the cafe when Lovell publicly reveals intimate details about him. Lovell follows Power and murders him. To establish an alibi, Lovell offers Margaret Lockwood, a cafe hostess, twenty thousand francs to say that he had spent the night with her. Margaret accepts the offer, completely unaware of his purpose. Police Inspector Hugh Sinclair traces the murder to Lovell, but cannot hold him because of his alibi. When Sinclair questions her, Margaret first realizes that Lovell was the murderer, but dares not tell the truth lest she implicate herself. Remembering that a young man, who worked at the cafe, had accompanied her home at the hour Lovell was supposedly in her apartment, Margaret returns the money to Lovell and informs him of her intentions to reveal the truth. But before she can do so, the young man is murdered. Meanwhile Sinclair discovers that the murdered man had once exposed Lovell as a fake. Lovell readily admits that he had reason to kill Power, but denies the crime. Convinced that Margaret was lying, because she feared Lovell, Sinclair tries a new plan. He assigns James Mason, a detective, to pose as a gay drunkard. Mason visits the cafe, becomes chummy with Margaret, and insists upon giving her a ring. She agrees to wear it for the evening. Sinclair identifies the ring as belonging to the dead man, and arrests Mason. He protests his innocence, claiming that he had bought the ring at a bar. Margaret offers to help him locate the seller. Although with her constantly, Mason learns nothing that would indicate her story was untrue. Eventually, both fall in love, and Mason's task becomes distasteful to him. As a last resort, Sinclair charges Mason with the murder. This causes Margaret to confess. Lovell commits suicide before the police reach him.

R. Carter, Juttke, and Companeez wrote the screen play, Josep Somlo and Herbert Smith produced it, and Brian Desmond Hurst directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Hangmen Also Die" with Brian Donlevy, Anna Lee and Walter Brennan

(United Artists, March 26; time, 134 min.)

Very good. Based on the ruthless Nazi reprisals that followed the assassination of Richard Heydrich, the Nazi "Hangman," this melodrama is exciting fare. Grim in its depiction of Nazi bestiality, the film extols the courage of the Czech people, and their determination to combat the Nazis even at the cost of their lives. The action, which revolves around the intensive search by the Gestapo for the assassin, is gripping and holds one in tense suspense. One is in deep sympathy with Brian Donlevy, who wants to give himself up to save hundreds of hostages, but is not permitted to do so by the "underground," lest the spirit of the people be broken. The performances are uniformly excellent, with that of Alexander Granach, as the Gestapo Inspector, outstand-

ing. Chief drawbacks of the film are its length and occasional lapses in the otherwise suspenseful and interesting action. "Hangmen Also Die" is inspirational stuff, but by no means pleasant:—

After murdering Heydrich, "The Hangman," Brian Donlevy, a surgeon and leading figure in the Czech "underground" movement, seeks refuge in the home of Anna Lee, who had helped him escape from the pursuing Gestapo. Professor Walter Brennan, Anna's father, allows Donlevy to stay overnight. In the morning the Gestapo, rounding up hostages for the slaying, select the professor as one of their victims. In order to save her father, Anna goes to the Gestapo to reveal Donlevy. But she retains her secret when she realizes that Donlevy had become a symbol of freedom to the Czech people. Gestapo Inspector Alexander Granach takes charge of the hunt, and has Anna followed. To dispel Granach's suspicions, Anna and Donlevy make it appear as if they were carrying on a secret love affair, even going so far as to stage a bedroom sequence. Finding them in this compromising situation, Granach tests Anna by confronting her with Dennis O'Keefe, her fiance. But Anna acts the part so well that even O'Keefe becomes convinced of her love for Donlevy. Granach takes O'Keefe on an all-night spree to soothe his feelings. In the morning, however, O'Keefe realizes that the bedroom scene had been staged, and that Donlevy was the hunted assassin. He inadvertently gives this discovery away to Granach. O'Keefe tries to prevent Granach from acting on this information, but Granach overpowers him and departs to capture Donlevy. Managing to free himself, O'Keefe rushes to warn Donlevy, arriving in time to rescue him and to assist in killing Granach. Meanwhile, in order to gain the release of the hostages, the "underground" deliberately weaves an amazing web of evidence against Gene Lockhart, a local "Quisling," who had been working with Granach. Although they suspect that the "underground" had outwitted them, the Gestapo, in order to save face, accept Lockhart as the assassin. He is killed. Many hostages are freed, but Anna's father had been executed.

John Wexely wrote the screen play, and Fritz Lang produced and directed it. The cast includes Margaret Wycherly, Billy Roy, Tonio Selwart, and others.

Adult entertainment.

ABRAM F. MYERS' COMMENTS ON THE COURT'S DECISION IN THE CRESCENT CIRCUIT CASE

(Continued from back page)

"5. Judge Davies directs that the monopolistic long-term franchises between Crescent affiliates and the major distributors be invalidated. The Consent Decree expressly protects the long-term franchises between the major companies and their circuits made before June 6, 1940.

"6. The order to be entered on Judge Davies' decision, if written in good faith, will be permanent and enduring. The provisions of the Consent Decree relating to the distribution of film soon lapsed through failure of the Government to proceed against the non-consenting defendants and there are no legal limitations on the Big Eight in this important respect today.

"7. Having neutralized the power of the Sudekum monopoly by ordering dissolution, Judge Davies provides against recreating the monopoly by stipulating that the exhibitor defendants may not acquire a financial interest in additional theatres 'except after an affirmative showing that such acquisitions will not unreasonably restrain competition.' Under the Consent Decree certain of the consenting defendants have acquired practically as many additional theatres as Sudekum operates altogether and those acquisitions have been approved by Judge Goddard.

"The Department of Justice fishes with a queer net that permits the big fish to escape and catches only the small fry."

"10. The defendants Crescent, Muscle Shoals, Rockwood, Cherokee, Lyric and Kentucky, have violated the Sherman Act by combining with each other and with each of the distributors, Paramount, Fox and Warner, in making franchises with the purpose and effect of maintaining their theatre monopolies and preventing independent theatres from competing with them.

"The franchises entered into between the co-conspirators, Paramount, Fox and Warner, and the defendant exhibitors are contracts in restraint of trade or commerce among the several states, tending to perpetuate the monopolies of the defendant exhibitors involved, foreclosing competition by independent exhibitors, with the defendant exhibitors in the licensing of film over large areas and for long periods of time.

"11. The defendant exhibitors, Crescent, Muscle Shoals, Rockwood, Cumberland and Cherokee, have collectively violated the Sherman Act by combining with each other for the purpose of dividing the territory in which theatres may be operated by any of them pursuant to implied agreements among themselves.

"12. The said defendant exhibitors have violated the Sherman Act by combining with each other for the purpose and with the effect of eliminating, suppressing and preventing independent competition in the territory in which each operates.

"13. The said defendant exhibitors have violated the Sherman Act by combining with each other, and with the major distributors, Paramount, Fox, Warner, Loew's, RKO, and United Artists, in licensing films for the purpose and with the effect of maintaining their theatre monopolies and preventing independent theatres from competing with them.

"14. The defendant Anthony Sudekum, has violated the Sherman Act by actively participating in the foregoing violations as president of Crescent, Cumberland and Lyric.

"15. The defendant, Kermit C. Stengel, has violated the Sherman Act by actively participating in the foregoing violations as an assistant to the defendant Sudekum, in managing Crescent, as president of Rockwood, vice-president of Cherokee, and vice-president of Kentucky.

"16. The defendant Louis Rosenbaum, has violated the Sherman Act by actively participating in the foregoing violations as manager and active partner of Muscle Shoals Theatres.

"17. The defendant United Artists Corporation, has violated the Sherman Act by the following acts:

"A. Combining with Cumberland, Rockwood, and Stengel to eliminate its independent theatre competition at Rogersville, Tennessee.

"B. Combining with Rosenbaum, Sudekum, Rockwood and Stengel to eliminate independent theatre competition of Muscle Shoals, at Athens, Alabama.

"This phase of the case has caused the Court more concern than any other question involved. The Court recognizes the rule that a distributor of motion picture film is perfectly free to do business with the exhibitor of its choice, and to negotiate with a circuit and an independent one, at one and the same time, and to sell either one it prefers to do business with, yet such conduct must be free from discrimination against independent enterprise as a result of pressure or coercion on the part of a monopoly or combination.

"There is no evidence that United Artists entered into a conspiracy with either Crescent, Rockwood, Cumberland Sudekum, Stengel or Rosenbaum, in any of these matters, yet to hold there was no discrimination in either of the above instances, would be ignoring the plain facts. Under all the circumstances, United Artists could hardly be blamed for preferring to do business with the circuit and its affiliates, but it should not have allowed such desire to influence its conduct to the extent it apparently did, in its dealings with Miller and Buchanan. The principal criticism for this situation, however, lies at the doorstep of the monopoly built up by Crescent and its affiliates, and United Artists hardly did more than cooperate with what it knew to be the policy of the monopoly in order to make an attractive business deal.

"18. The blanket contracts made by United Artists Corporation, for sixty-one situations in 1938-1938, and for seventy-three situations in 1939-1940, reflected the usual method adopted by this defendant in licensing its films to exhibitors, and as far as the contract itself is concerned, the Court can see no difference in the method adopted by this

defendant and the usual method followed by other distributors in making separate contracts with each exhibitor for a given number of films, nor is there anything more objectionable from the standpoint of inhibitions under the Sherman Act, in the choice of the defendant licensing its film in this manner, rather than following the usual procedure adopted by other distributors. The Court therefore concludes that the contract in itself, is not a contract in restraint of trade or commerce, in violation of any of the provisions of the Sherman Act; nor was the contract in this case executed with any purpose or intention to combine, conspire, or contract with the defendant exhibitors to suppress or restrain interstate commerce, nor with the intent, or purpose, of bringing about a monopoly in the exhibition of motion pictures in the territory involved in this cause.

"19. The plaintiff is entitled to an injunction restraining the defendants indicated herein from continuing in said conspiracies in restraint of trade and commerce, and from entering into any similar combinations and conspiracies having similar purposes and objects.

"20. The plaintiff is entitled to an injunction invalidating the existing franchises to which the exhibitor defendants are parties; invalidating existing agreements not to compete in the future to which the exhibitor defendants are parties; restraining each exhibitor defendant from conditioning the licensing of films in any competitive situation, outside Nashville, upon the licensing of films in any other theatre situation; and restraining each exhibitor defendant from acquiring a financial interest in additional theatres outside Nashville, except after an affirmative showing that such acquisition will not unreasonably restrain competition.

"21. The plaintiff is entitled to a decree dissolving the combination; requiring each corporate exhibitor defendant to divest itself of the ownership of any stock or other interest in any corporate defendant, or affiliated corporation, with the exception of Strand Enterprises, Inc., and requiring the individual defendants found guilty herein of violating the Sherman Act, to resign as officers of any affiliated corporation, and requiring the defendant Rosenbaum to terminate and dissolve the partnership of Muscle Shoals Theatres, and requiring him to divest himself of any interest which he may have in any of the corporate defendants, which said acts of dissolution shall be performed within one year from date of entry of judgment in this cause. Judgment will be entered accordingly.

"This the 3rd day of March, 1943.

"ELMER D. DAVIES,

"United States District Judge."

"BEARING ON THE CONSENT DECREE

"Judge Davies' decision emphasizes the monstrous miscarriage of justice that was effected when the trial of the principal suit against the Big Eight was settled (temporarily) on the basis of the Consent Decree.

"1. Judge Davies finds Crescent affiliates guilty of violating the Sherman Act in building up their monopoly in the theatre business. The five consenting defendants in signing the Consent Decree were permitted to protest their innocence and there was no adjudication of guilt.

"2. Judge Davies has ordered dissolution of the offending combination. The Consent Decree protects and perpetuates the monopoly of the consenting defendants.

"3. Judge Davies' decision contemplates a direct and immediate remedy to be provided by the Court. The Consent Decree merely provides a woefully inadequate arbitration system and leaves the exhibitors to work out their own salvation.

"4. The order contemplated by Judge Davies' decision, if written in good faith, will be effective. The Consent Decree has been branded as inadequate by the Temporary National Economic Committee, by the several exhibitor associations, by a number of arbitrators and only recently has been criticized by the Appeal Board.*

"* In Decision No. 58, Matter of Lakeview Theatres, the Appeal Board found that the conduct of the distributors in selling away from the complainant and supplying their pictures to the chain was 'less than fair dealing.' But it could find no remedy in the technicalities and limitations of the Consent Decree. The lesson for exhibitors in cases of this kind, is: 'Sue, don't arbitrate.'

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HARRISON'S REPORTS

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4203	The Fighting Buckaroo—Starrett	Feb. 1
4014	Reveille with Beverly—Miller-Wright	Feb. 4
4036	No Place for a Lady—Lindsay-Gargan	Feb. 11
4211	Riders of the Northwest Mounted—Hayden	Feb. 15
	(57 min.)	
	Something To Shout About—Ameche-Blair-Oakie	Feb. 25
4040	Let's Have Fun—Gordon-Lindsay	Mar. 4
4031	After Midnite with Boston Blackie—Morris	Mar. 18
	The Desperadoes—Scott-Ford	Mar. 25
	Murder in Times Square—Chapman-Lowe	Apr. 1
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4212	Saddles and Sagebrush—Hayden	Apr. 22

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(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

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323	Cabin in the Sky—Horne-Waters-Anderson	April
324	A Stranger in Town—Morgan-Rogers	April
325	Slightly Dangerous—Turner-Young	April
326	Assignment in Brittany—Aumont-Peters	April
327	Air Raid Wardens—Laurel-Hardy	April

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(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 208 One Thrilling Night—Beal-McKay Aug. 28
 207 Isle of Missing Men—Howard-Roland-Gilb't. Sept. 11
 261 Texas to Bataan—King (56 min.) Oct. 16
 217 Bowery at Midnight—Bela Lugosi Oct. 30
 206 'Neath Brooklyn Bridge—East Side Kids Nov. 20
 223 The Living Ghost—Dunn-Woodbury Nov. 27
 262 Trail Riders—King (55 min.) Dec. 4
 209 Rhythm Parade—Storm-Lowery Dec. 11
 251 Dawn on the Great Divide—Buck Jones Dec. 18
 263 Two Fisted Justice—King (55 min.) Jan. 8
 224 The Silent Witness—Albertson-Wrixon Jan. 15
 214 Crime Smasher—Cosmo Jones Jan. 29
 203 Kid Dynamite—East Side Kids Feb. 5
 219 Prison Mutiny (formerly "You Can't Beat the Law")—Norris-Woodbury Feb. 12
 264 Haunted Ranch—Range Busters Feb. 19
 201 Silver Skates—Kenny-Morison-Belita Feb. 26
 218 The Ape Man—Bela Lugosi Mar. 19
 265 Land of Hunted Men—Range Busters Mar. 26
 252 Ghost Rider—Johnny Mack Brown Apr. 2
 256 Wild Horse Stampede—Gibson-Maynard Apr. 16
 204 Clancy Street Boys—East Side Kids Apr. 23
 202 I Escaped from the Gestapo—Brian-Jagger ... May 14
 Sarong Girl—Corio-Davis May 28

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 4215 Lucky Jordan—Ladd-Walker Feb. 26
 4216 Lady Bodyguard—Albert-Shirley Mar. 12
 4217 Happy Go Lucky—Powell-Martin Mar. 26
 4218 Henry Aldrich Gets Glamour—Jimmy Lydon. Apr. 9
 4219 Night Plane from Chungking—Preston-Drew. May 7
 4221 High Explosive—Morris-Parker
 4222 China—Ladd-Bendix-Young No
 4223 Aerial Gunner—Morris-Arlen release
 4224 Five Graves to Cairo—Tone-Baxter. date
 4225 Salute for Three—Carey-Rhodes set

Producers Releasing Corp. Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 352 Texas Rangers No. 2—Newill-O'B. (59m.) .. Mar. 5
 312 Queen of Broadway—Hudson-Crabbe Mar. 8
 359 Billy the Kid No. 3—Crabbe (55m.) Mar. 12
 313 Behind Prison Walls—Baxter-Michael Mar. 22
 31 Corregidor—Landi-Kruger (re.) Mar. 29
 311 My Son, The Hero—Kelly-Karns Apr. 5
 322 Terror House—Lawson Apr. 19
 314 The Ghost and the Guest—Dunn-Rice Apr. 19
 365 Lone Rider No. 3—Livingston (re.) Apr. 30
 353 Texas Rangers No. 3—Newill-O'Brien May 1
 30 Follies Girl—Barrie-Oliver May 3
 360 Billy the Kid No. 4—Crabbe May 14
 305 Girls in Chains—Judge-Clark May 17
 321 The Black Raven—George Zucco May 31
 366 The Lone Rider No. 4—Livingston June 1

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 274 Dead Man's Gulch—Red Barry (55m.) (re.) . Feb. 13
 2302 South of the Border—Autry (57m.) (re.) .. Mar. 1
 252 Idaho—Roy Rogers (70m.) (re.) Mar. 10
 212 The Purple V—Archer-McLeod (re.) Mar. 12

- 264 Blocked Trail—Steele-Tyler (55m.) (re.) .. Mar. 12
 778 At Dawn We Die—English cast Mar. 20
 275 Carson City Cyclone—Don Barry (55m.) .. Mar. 23
 214 Alibi—Lockwood-Sinclair Mar. 24
 215 Hit Parade of 1943—Carroll-Hayward (re.) . Mar. 26
 216 Tahiti Honey—O'Keefe-Simon Apr. 6
 254 King of the Cowboys—Roy Rogers Apr. 9
 217 The Mantrap—Stephenson-Allen, Jr. Apr. 13
 2303 Gaucho Serenade—Gene Autry (reissue) ... Apr. 15
 265 Sante Fe Scouts—Steele-Tyler Apr. 16
 2311 Calling Wild Bill Elliott—Elliott-Hayes ... Apr. 16
 218 Shantytown—Archer-Lord Apr. 20
 217 Chatterbox—Brown-Canova (re.) Apr. 27
 276 Day of Old Cheyenne—Don Barry Apr. 29
 266 Riders of the Rio Grande—Steele-Tyler May 5
 Swing Your Partner—Vague-Cheshire May 12
 Prodigal's Mother—Paige-Craven May 19
 False Faces—Ridges-Williams May 26
 2312 Man from Thunder River—Elliott-Hayes ... May 30

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 383 Fighting Frontier—Tim Holt (57m.) (re.) ... Jan. 15
 318 Cinderella Swings It—Kibbee-Warren (re.) .. Jan. 22
 352 They Got Me Covered—Hope-Lamour Feb. 5
 307 Journey Into Fear—Welles-Cotten-Del Rio .. Feb. 12
 392 Saludos Amigos—Walt Disney (re.) Feb. 19
 319 Tarzan Triumphs—Weismuller-Gifford (re.) . Feb. 19
 317 Two Weeks to Live—Lum-Abner (re.) Feb. 26
 351 Pride of the Yankees—Cooper-Wright Mar. 5
 316 Hitler's Children—Holt-Granville (re.) Mar. 19
 320 Forever and a Day—All-star (re.) Mar. 26
 321 Flight for Freedom—Russell-MacMurray Apr. 2
 384 Sagebrush Law—Tim Holt (56 min.) Apr. 2
 322 Ladies' Day—Velez-Albert Apr. 9
 323 This Land Is Mine—Laughton-O'Hara Apr. 23
 324 I Walked with a Zombie—Dee-Conway Apr. 30
 325 The Falcon Strikes Back—Conway-Randolph. May 7

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 316 The Young Mr. Pitt—Robert Donat Feb. 26
 332 Dixie Dugan—Ellison-Andrews Mar. 12
 331 Quiet Please, Murder—Sanders-Patrick Mar. 19
 333 Hello, Frisco, Hello—Faye-Oakie-Payne Mar. 26
 334 He Hired the Boss—Erwin-Venable Apr. 2
 335 The Moon Is Down—Hardwicke Apr. 9

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- The Powers Girl—Shirley-Landis-Murphy Jan. 15
 The Crystal Ball—Milland-Goddard (re.) Jan. 22
 Calaboose—Rogers, Jr.-Beery, Jr. (re.) Jan. 29
 Young and Willing—Holden-Hayward Feb. 5
 In Which We Serve—Noel Coward (re.) Feb. 12
 Fall In—Hal Roach (re.) Mar. 5
 Hoppy Serves a Writ—Hopalong (67 min.) Mar. 12
 Hangmen Also Die—Donlevy-Lee Mar. 26
 Border Patrol—Hopalong (67 min.) Apr. 2
 Lady of Burlesque—Stanwyck-O'Brien Apr. 9
 Taxi, Mister—Hal Roach Apr. 16
 Stage Door Canteen—All-star Apr. 25
 Somewhere in France—English cast May 7
 Buckskin Frontier—Dix-Wyatt May 14
 Prairie Chickens—Hal Roach May 21
 Leather Burners—Hopalong May 28

Universal Features

- (1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)
- 7074 Tenting on the Old Camp Ground—
Brown-Ritter (61 min.)Feb. 5
- 7025 How's About It?—Andrews SistersFeb. 5
- 7024 Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon—
Rathbone-BruceFeb. 12
- 7005 The Amazing Mrs. Holliday—Durbin-O'B.Feb. 19
- 7031 Hi Buddy—Paige-HilliardFeb. 26
- 7039 Hi' Ya Chum—Ritz BrothersMar. 5
- 7012 Frankenstein Meets the Wolfman—
Lugosi-ChaneyMar. 12
- 7001 It Ain't Hay—Abbott-CostelloMar. 19
- 7041 He's My Guy—Davis-ForanMar. 26
- 7040 Keep 'Em Slugging—KidsApr. 2
- 7023 It Comes Up Love—Jean-O'ConnorApr. 9
- 7075 Cheyenne Roundup—Brown-Ritter (59m.)Apr. 9
- 7042 Rhythm of the Islands—Frazee-JonesApr. 16
- White Savage—Montez-Hall-SabuApr. 23
- Sherlock Holmes in Washington—
Rathbone-BruceApr. 30
- Next of Kin—Basil SidneyMay 7
- We've Never Been Licked—Gwynne-QuineMay 14
- Cowboy in Manhattan—Langford-PaigeMay 21
- Corvettes in Action—Knowles-ForanMay 28

Warner-First National Features

- (321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)
- 217 Air Force—Garfield-CareyMar. 20
- 219 Edge of Darkness—Flynn-SheridanApr. 24

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**Columbia—One Reel**

- 4657 Com. Sings No. 7 (9m.)Feb. 18
- 4972 Point Rationing—OWI (free) (6m.)Feb. 25
- 4506 There's Something About a Soldier—
Color Rhapsody (7m.)Feb. 26
- 4857 Screen Snapshots No. 7 (10m.)Feb. 26
- 4805 Diving Daredevils—Sports (10m.)Feb. 26
- 4706 Kindly Scram—Phantasies (9m.) (re.)Mar. 5
- 4973 Farmer At War—OWI (free) (9m.) (re.)Mar. 11
- 4507 Professor Small and Mr. Tall—Col. R. (7m.)Mar. 26
- 4658 Com. Sings No. 8 (10m.)Mar. 26
- 4806 Ski Soldiers—Sports (10m.)Mar. 26
- 4858 Screen Snapshots No. 8Mar. 31
- 4707 Willoughby's Magic Hat—PhantasiesApr. 30
- 4508 Plenty Below Zero—Col. Rhap.May 14
- 4659 Com. Sings No. 9May 14

Columbia—Two Reels

- 4431 A Maid Made Mad—All-starMar. 19
- 4155 Empire's End—Valley of Vanishing Men
No. 15 (20 min.)Mar. 25
- 4405 Spook Louder—Stooges (16 min.)Apr. 16
- 4432 Blonde and Groom—All-starApr. 16

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- T-416 Mexican Police on Parade—Travel. (9m.) ..Feb. 27
- W-444 Dumb-Hounded—Carton (8m.)Mar. 20
- S-463 Hollywood Daredevils—Pete Smith (9m.) .Mar. 20
- T-417 On the Road to Monterey—Travel. (9m.) ..Mar. 27
- C-493 Family Troubles—Our Gang (11m.)Apr. 3
- S-464 Wild Horses—Pete Smith (10m.)Apr. 10

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-401 Keep 'Em Sailing—Special (20m.)Nov. 28
- A-402 Plan for Destruction—Special (21m.)Apr. 9

Paramount—One Reel

- W2-2 The Mummy Strikes—Superman (10m.) ...Feb. 19
- R2-5 Hike or Bike—Spotlight (10m.) (re.)Mar. 5
- A2-5 Ina R. Hutton & Orch.—Head. (10m.) (re.) .Mar. 12
- U2-3 Bravo Mr. Strauss—Mad. Mod. (7½m.) ...Mar. 12
- E2-6 To Weak to Work—Popeye (6m.) (re.) ...Mar. 19
- Y2-2 At the Bird Farm—Speaking of Animals
(9 min.) (re.)Mar. 19
- W2-3 Jungle Drums—Superman (10m.)Mar. 26
- J2-4 Popular Science No. 4 (10m.)Apr. 2
- T2-4 The Aldrich Family Gets Into Scrap—
Victory short (10m.) (re.)Apr. 8
- R2-6 Beach Command—Spotlight (9m.)Apr. 16
- A2-6 Moments of Charm—Headliner (reissue) ...Apr. 16
- E2-7 A Jolly Good Furlough—PopeyeApr. 23
- L2-4 Unusual Occupations No. 4Apr. 30
- U2-4 The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins—
Mad. Mod. (8 min.)Apr. 30
- Y2-3 Speaking of Animals in Current Events—
Speaking of AnimalsMay 7
- A2-7 Letter from Iceland—Head.May 14
- R2-7 Tumble Bugs—SpotlightMay 14
- W2-4 Superman in the Underground World—Sup.May 21
- E2-8 Ration Fer the Duration—PopeyeMay 28

RKO—One Reel

- 34405 Enric Madriguera & Orch.—Jam. (8m.) ...Dec. 25
- 34305 Basketeers—Sportsopes (9m.)Jan. 1
- 34306 Ski Trails—Sportsopes (8m.)Jan. 29
- 34101 Donald's Tire Trouble—Disney (7m.)Jan. 29
- 34102 Pluto and the Armadillo—Disney (7m.) ..Feb. 19
- 34307 Trout—Sportsopes (8m.)Feb. 26
- 34103 Flying Jalopy—Disney (7m.)Mar. 12
- 34104 Private Pluto—Disney (7m.)Apr. 2

RKO—Two Reels

- 33103 Army Chaplain—This Is America (19m.) ..Dec. 18
- 33704 Double Up—Leon Errol (18m.)Jan. 29
- 33404 Hold Your Temper—Ed. Kennedy (17m.) .Feb. 5
- 34202 City of Courage—Victory Special (9m.) ...Feb. 11
- 33104 Boomtown, D. C.—This Is America (19m.) .Feb. 12
- 33105 Air Crew—This Is America (18m.)Mar. 12

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 3557 Frankenstein's Cat—Terry-Toon (7m.)Nov. 27
- 3901 Monkey Doodle Dandies—
Lew Lehr (9 min.) (re.)Dec. 4
- 3558 Barnyard WAAC—Terry-Toon (7m.) (re.) .Dec. 12
- 3302 When Winter Calls—Sports (9m.) (re.) ...Dec. 18
- 3156 Strange Empire—Magic Carpet (8m.) (re.) .Jan. 1
- 3567 Somewhere in France—T. T. (9m.) (re.) ...Jan. 8
- 3303 Steel-head Fighters—Sports (9m.) (re.)Jan. 15
- 3559 Scrap for Victory—Terry-T. (7m.) (re.) ...Jan. 22
- 3568 He Dood It Again—Terry-T. (7m.) (re.) ...Feb. 5
- 3304 Back to Bikes—Sports (9m.) (re.)Feb. 12
- 3155 Gay Rio—Magic Carpet (9m.)Feb. 19
- 3157 Land Where Time Stood Still—
Magic Carpet (9 min.) (re.)Feb. 26
- 3560 Barnyard Blackout—Terry-Toon (7m.)Mar. 5
- 3561 Shipyard Symphony—Terry-Toon (9m.) ..Mar. 19
- 3562 Patriotic Pooches—Terry-Toon (7m.)Apr. 9
- 3202 Climbing the Peaks—H. James (9m.) (re.) ..Apr. 16
- 3401 W.A.V.E.S.—World Today (10m.)Apr. 30

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

- Vol. 9 No. 6 A Day of War—Russia—
March of Time (20 min.)Jan. 29
- Vol. 9 No. 7 New Canada—M. of T. (20m.)Feb. 26
- Vol. 9 No. 8 America's Food Crisis—
March of Time (20 min.)Mar. 26

Universal—One Reel

- 7377 She's A-1 in the Navy—Per. Odd. (9m.) ...Feb. 8
- 7244 The Screwball—Lantz Carttune (7m.)Feb. 15
- 0996 Arsenal of Might—Vict. Featurette (10m.)..Feb. 22
- 7358 Hungry India—Var. Views (9m.)Mar. 1
- 7378 Little Clayton Farmfront Wonder—
Per. Odd. (9 min.)Mar. 8
- 7234 Egg Cracker Suite—Swing Symph. (7m.)..Mar. 22
- 7359 Mr. Chimp Goes To Town—Var. Views....Apr. 12
- 7379 Shepherd of the Roundhouse—Per. Odd. ...Apr. 19
- 7245 Swing Your Partner—Lantz CartuneApr. 26

Universal—Two Reels

- 7592 The Torture Fire Test—Smilin' Jack No. 12
(21 min.)Mar. 23
- 7593 Sinking the Rising Sun—Smilin' Jack No. 13
(21 min.)Mar. 30
- 8681 Trapped in a Blazing Sea—Don Winslow No. 1
(20 min.)Apr. 6
- 7128 Swing That Band—Musical (15m.)Apr. 7
- 8682 Battling a U-Boat—Don Win. No. 2 (20m.)..Apr. 13
- 8683 The Crash in the Clouds—Don W. No. 3 (18m.)
- 8683 The Crash in the Clouds—
Don Winslow No. 3 (18 min.)Apr. 20
- 8684 The Scorpion Strikes—Don W. No.4 (22m.)Apr. 27
- 8685 A Flaming Target—Don W. No. 5 (20m.)..May 4

Vitaphone—One Reel

- 8607 Wise Quacking Duck—Looney Tune (7m.)..Apr. 17
- 8409 With Rod & Reel on Anticosti Island—
Sports (10 min.)May 1
- 8608 Tokio Jokio—Looney Tune (7m.)May 1
- 8714 Greetings Bait—Mer. Mel. (7m.)May 1
- 8507 U. S. Army Band—Mel. Mas. (10m.)May 8
- 8609 Yankee Doodle Daffy—L. Tune (7m.)May 15
- 8715 Jack Rabbit & the Beanstalk—Mer. M. (7m.)..May 15
- 8716 The Aristo Cat—Mer. Mel. (7m.).....May 29
- 8410 Canine Commandos—Sports (10m.)May 29

Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 8108 Our African Frontier—B'way Brev.
(20 min.) (re.)Feb. 13
- 8109 Army Show—B'way Brev. (20m.)Feb. 22
- 8003 Young and Beautiful—Special (20m.) (re.)..Mar. 13
- 8110 Rear Gunner—B'way Brev. (20m.)Apr. 10
- 8004 Eagles of the Navy—B'way Brev. (20m.) ...Apr. 24
- 8111 Three Cheers for the Girls—B'way Brev.
(20 min.)May 22

**NEWSWEEKLY
NEW YORK
RELEASE DATES**

Pathe News

- 35163 Sat. (O.) Apr. 3
- 35264 Wed. (E.) Apr. 7
- 35165 Sat. (O.) Apr. 10
- 35266 Wed. (E.) Apr. 14
- 35167 Sat. (O.) Apr. 17
- 35268 Wed. (E.) Apr. 21
- 35169 Sat. (O.) Apr. 24
- 35270 Wed. (E.) Apr. 28
- 35171 Sat. (O.) May 1
- 35272 Wed. (E.) May 5
- 35173 Sat. (O.) May 8
- 35274 Wed. (E.) May 12
- 35175 Sat. (O.) May 15
- 35276 Wed. (E.) May 19
- 35177 Sat. (O.) May 22

Paramount News

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- 73 FridayMay 8
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Universal

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- 181 FridayApr. 23
- 182 Wednesday .Apr. 28
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- 187 FridayMay 14
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- 190 Wednesday .May 23

Metrotone News

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- 260 Thursday ..Apr. 8
- 261 Tuesday ...Apr. 13
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Fox Movietone

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- 67 Wednesday ..Apr. 28
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- 70 SaturdayMay 8
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- 72 SaturdayMay 15
- 73 Wednesday ..May 19
- 74 SaturdayMay 22

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SATURDAY, APRIL 10, 1943

No. 15

HERE AND THERE

THIS PAPER NOTES WITH gratification that Cagney Productions has signed William K. Howard to a term contract, and has assigned him to direct its first production, "McLeod's Folly." The picture will be released through United Artists.

Bill Howard, who has one of the keenest directorial minds in the business, started his film career as a shipping clerk. He worked himself up to salesman, and eventually became a branch manager in Minneapolis, gaining for himself a reputation as one of the best salesmen in the business.

After serving his country in World War I, Howard decided to forsake the sales end of the business, and to try his hand at production. Starting at the bottom on the Fox lot, he worked his way up until he became one of the highest paid and most successful directors.

At the height of his career, Bill Howard became the victim of a vicious Hollywood system—a system that allows a chosen few to organize and maintain a unified boycott against any one with whom they disagree.

Howard was ostracized because of certain derogatory remarks he supposedly made about Hollywood to the London press. Although Howard maintained that he had been misquoted by the London papers, none would lend a sympathetic ear to his explanations. The industry closed its doors against him, and prevented him from earning his livelihood.

A little over a year ago, this paper took up the cause of Bill Howard, and deplored this system, which gave one the power to pronounce "death" on the livelihood of any one, let alone Howard.

Jimmy and Bill Cagney are to be congratulated, not only for their foresight in selecting a director who can turn out meritorious pictures, but for their fairness in ignoring a system that unjustly shuts out from the business artists of high caliber.

* * *

SPEAKING ON THE QUESTION of deferment for actors and other entertainment talent, Major General Lewis B. Hershey, Selective Service Director, is reported by *Film Daily* to have said "the failure of the public to fully appreciate their value is the stumbling block in the way of special consideration by Selective Service."

"Our action," said the General, "must be based upon public acceptance. The public is willing to accept certain things, such as work in a war factory, as essential. It fails to accept other things, even though they too may be important. . . . We can't get too far ahead or too far behind what the public thinks . . . the important fact is whether the public is satisfied. Are mothers content to have their sons go into battle in North Africa and Guadalcanal while musicians stay at home and play an instrument? Are they civilized enough to realize that musicians sell bonds while their sons are in Africa?"

Industry groups, which are reported as continuing strong

representations in Washington to obtain occasional picture assignments for top stars now in the armed services, might take their cue from General Hershey, and concentrate on selling the idea to the public. Once the public is won over, the task of selling Washington will be easy.

* * *

THE MUCH PUBLICIZED voluntary plan for the elimination of dual bills in the St. Louis area has hit a snag.

At a recent meeting of the St. Louis exhibitors, who originally passed a resolution favoring the adoption of a single bill policy after June 1st, it was decided to veto the resolution and reconsider the plan.

Under consideration is a new plan, which calls for subsequent run exhibitors to pledge themselves to a single feature policy on such films as are played singly in the first run houses.

Unless limitations are placed on the extended playing time now given to most features good enough to play singly in first run double-feature houses, HARRISON'S REPORTS doubts the feasibility of such a plan. In all probability it will not work out, for few first run theatres, if any, will be willing to give up profits on a film that continues to draw patrons to their theatres. In many situations, contract requirements will compel a first run exhibitor to grant extended playing time.

Under such circumstances, the subsequent run exhibitor, who will find that the picture he had been expected to play singly had been "milked" considerably, will of necessity have to resort to a supporting feature in order to draw patrons to his theatre. And you cannot blame him for that.

* * *

IN A TELEGRAM TO Mr. Abram F. Myers, counsel for Allied States Association, Mr. Collis Stockett, associate director of the War Manpower Commission's Bureau of Planning and Review, has clarified the status of motion picture projectionists. States the telegram:

"Reulet War Manpower Commission's Committee on essential activities has not included motion picture projectionists in list and index of essential activities. However, Committee clearly has excluded motion picture projectionists from list of non-deferrable activities and occupations which was released February 2, 1943. Unable to verify information given to Local Union International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Motion Picture Operators that motion picture projectionists not essential. Would urge that motion picture projectionists remain on present jobs until specific need for change has been indicated by the War Manpower Commission."

Because much confusion has resulted from published reports to the effect that projectionists had been rated as non-essential, Mr. Myers urges exhibitors to communicate the contents of this telegram to their operators, in order to halt a threatened stampede from booths to occupations listed as essential.

"My Friend Flicka" with Roddy MacDowall, Preston Foster and Rita Johnson

(20th Century-Fox, April 23; time, 89 min.)

Excellent! Adapted from Mary O'Hara's best-selling novel of the same title, this simple drama about a boy on a ranch, and his strong attachment for a colt, is deeply appealing. It is a wholesome entertainment, and most audiences will consider it a welcome relief from the war films that now dominate the screen. There are no villains, and every one is kind and considerate. Roddy MacDowall is at his best. As a matter of fact, the whole cast is excellent. Many of the situations will stir the emotions, particularly the one in which Roddy consents to having his sick colt put out of her misery, but pleads that the shooting be delayed until the following morning. Another very touching situation is where Roddy stays with his sick filly throughout the night, submerged in a cold stream, caressing her. In addition to the story's appealing nature, the film is pictorially beautiful, the impressive outdoor scenery having been photographed in Technicolor. Because of the wholesomeness of the picture, it provides fine entertainment for the younger element, which should be inspired by the development of a young boy's character. Roddy MacDowall's sympathetic handling of his role will endear him to many movie-goers:—

Roddy MacDowall, a high-strung, sensitive youngster, is not completely understood by Preston Foster, his father. Roddy, who spends his time dreaming of the day when he will have a horse of his own, is a failure at school and neglectful of his chores on the ranch. Baffled by the boy, Foster gives in to the pleading of Rita Johnson, his wife, and offers Roddy the choice of any colt on the ranch, in the hope that pride of ownership will arouse the boy's sense of responsibility. Roddy chooses a filly of a strain that Foster believes "loco," and insists upon sticking to his choice, despite the misgivings of his father. Foster's apprehension is almost immediately justified. "Flicka," as Roddy had named the colt, injures herself trying to vault a barbed-wire fence. Roddy tenderly nurses her back to health, winning to some extent his father's respect. Flicka becomes aware that the boy loves her, but she still remains wild and frightened. Roddy's happiness is complete when he at last tries a halter on Flicka and she responds. But Roddy's happiness is short-lived; Flicka suffers a relapse, and her condition grows steadily worse. Tearfully, Roddy consents to having the animal put out of its misery. That night Roddy, disturbed at the thought that Flicka will be shot in the morning, is unable to sleep. He goes to the pasture where he finds Flicka on the verge of death, her body immersed in a cold mountain stream. Overcome, the boy stays with the colt throughout the night. He is found in the morning ill with pneumonia. Realizing how much the colt meant to Roddy, Foster determines to nurse her back to health. Several weeks later, nearly well, Roddy is carried by Foster to the pasture where his unbelieving eyes behold Flicka, completely recovered.

Lillie Hayward wrote the screen play, Ralph Dietrich produced it, and Harold Schuster directed it. The cast includes James Bell, Diana Hale, and others.

"Desert Victory"

(20th Century-Fox, April 16; time, 60 min.)

This documentary record of the British Eighth Army's rout of Marshal Rommel's Afrika Korps will startle your patrons out of their seats. It is without question the greatest film record that has come out of this war. Throughout its sixty minutes it holds one's interest so tightly, one feels as if he is taking part in the campaign.

The film opens with the British at El Alamein, and shows the extensive preparation made by General Montgomery prior to the attack that was to carry his army across the sands of Egypt and Libya into Tripoli. Through means of a chart, the spectator is shown the battle plans of the opposing forces, thus helping him to better understand the strategic moves.

The highlight of the film comes when darkness falls and

the hour of attack approaches. The audience is treated to the same nerve-tingling sensation that is felt by the soldiers; the screen goes blank for a full thirty seconds while the commentator, in hushed tones, explains that the synchronized watches are crawling toward the zero hour. Suddenly, out of the stillness, comes the cry, "FIRE," and there begins a barrage of such intensity, one is literally lifted out of his seat. The noise is terrifying. From then on, modern warfare, in all its horror, is unleashed. Guns, planes, and tanks go forward into battle, followed by the infantry, led by Scottish bagpipers. Men dying in battle; tanks and planes clashing and burning; land mines exploding; the strafing of moving columns; the actual capture of prisoners—all these, and more, make up this amazing graphic record of the victorious British campaign against Rommel.

It is a picture worth exploiting; your patrons will not be disappointed.

The film was produced by the Army Film and Photographic Unit and the Royal Air Force Film Production Unit. Lt. Col. David MacDonald was in charge of production, Capt. Roy Boulting directed it and supervised the editing, and J. L. Hudson wrote the excellent commentary.

"Next of Kin" with an all-English cast

(Universal, May 7; time, 84 min.)

Originally produced to be shown exclusively to England's armed forces as a visual warning against the dangers of loose talk by soldiers and sailors in their casual conversations with civilians, "Next of Kin" effectively puts over its message to the spectator, for it depicts how well-meaning citizens can unwittingly pass stray remarks that may result in tragic consequences. As a message-carrying film, the production is excellent. As entertainment, however, it rates no better than program fare. The story, which deals with the machinations of a Nazi spy ring, and the methods by which they piece together vital bits of information to make a complete picture, unfolds in slow fashion. But this is more than made up for in the closing situations where the British stage a thrilling and extremely realistic raid on a French coastal village. In an epilogue, J. Edgar Hoover, director of the F.B.I., urges the American public to heed the picture's message. It is not a documentary film:—

To assure the utmost secrecy about a planned raid on a French coastal town, British Intelligence orders Major Reginald Tate, security officer, to take the 95th Brigade to a secret camp for special commando training. Private Alexander Field innocently reveals the location of the camp to Phyllis Stanley, a strip-tease dancer, unaware that she and her maid were spies. Berlin dispatches agents John Chandos and Marvin John to England to learn the plans of the 95th Brigade. Chandos is captured shortly after parachuting to earth. John, however, arrives by submarine, and contacts Stephen Murray, head of the spy ring. Murray used his small book shop to cover up his activities. John is sent to an inn near the Brigade's training camp. Phyllis, too, goes to the inn to visit Field. John's questioning of the soldiers reaches Tate, and the security officer visits the inn to investigate. He succeeds in arresting Phyllis, but John manages to escape. After transferring John to an ordnance factory, Murray reveals himself as a German spy to Nova Pilbeam, his clerk, a Dutch refugee. He compels her to obtain from her soldier sweetheart the information that John had failed to learn, threatening reprisals against her parents in Holland if she refused. From the partial information obtained by both John and Nova, Murray pieces together the plans of the brigade. Nova stabs Murray to death to prevent him from advising Berlin of the plans. But before she can escape, John murders her. He transmits the plans to Berlin, and the Nazis prepare to trap the British. When the great raid is launched, the 95th Brigade is almost annihilated; some of its number had talked too much.

The screen play was written by Thorold Dickinson, Basil Bartlett, Angus McPhail and John Dighton. S. C. Balcon and Michael Balcon produced it, and Mr. Dickinson directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Chatterbox" with Judy Canova and Joe E. Brown

(Republic, April 27; time, 76 min.)

This comedy with music will need all of Joe E. Brown's and Judy Canova's popularity to put it across. The picture has no resemblance to RKO's 1936 production of the same title. There are a number of amusing situations, but for the most part they are of the type that will best be appreciated by the stars' ardent followers. The story, which is nonsensical, lacks novelty, and lags considerably at times. One of the best comedy situations, which is really a carbon copy of the one in Charlie Chaplin's "The Gold Rush," though not as hilarious, is where Judy and Brown are trapped in a cabin that is half on the ground with the other half hanging over a precipice, tilting and returning to balance as they move about on the inside. There are a few musical numbers, none of which are outstanding:—

To herald the screen debut of Joe E. Brown, a radio cowboy, Majestic Pictures invites the press to a welcoming party at a dude ranch. Suspecting that Brown had never been on a horse, Rosemary Lane, a columnist, suggests that he pose on horseback. Brown manages the horse in good order until Judy Canova, hired girl on the ranch, breaks into song. Her high-pitched voice causes the horse to buck wildly, pitching Brown to the ground. Judy's presence of mind saves him from being trampled. Rosemary sees to it that Brown is publicized as a fake. John Hubbard, a producer, and Gus Schilling, a writer, hope that the adverse publicity will relieve them of the distasteful task of making a film star of Brown. But Hubbard's boss not only insists that he go ahead with the picture, but also that he cash in on the publicity by giving Judy the female lead. Judy refuses to become a "painted doll," but Brown wins her consent by telling her that his earnings from the picture would provide a home for his mother. When Judy discovers that Brown's touching story about his "aged mother" is an invention, Brown tries to patch up things by masquerading as his own mother. To his consternation, Hubbard and Schilling both have the same idea. Judy becomes confused when she sees three identical "mothers." Brown, however, convinces her that she is overwrought and "seeing things." To endear Brown to the public, Hubbard schemes to have him rescue Judy from a mountain, near where the Highway Department was dynamiting. Learning of the plot, Rosemary plans to expose it. Her interference, however, places Judy and Brown in real danger. After several harrowing moments, Brown rescues Judy, thus redeeming himself in the eyes of his fans.

George Carleton Brown and Frank Gill, Jr., wrote the screen play, Albert J. Cohen produced it, and Joseph Stanley directed it. The cast includes Anne Jeffreys, Emmett Vogan, the Mills Brothers, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Cowboy in Manhattan" with Frances Langford, Robert Paige and Leon Errol

(Universal, May 21; time, 59 min.)

An entertaining comedy with music; it should serve its purpose as a supporting feature in most situations. Frances Langford's popularity as a radio singer may be of help at the box-office. Songs of the popular swing variety and others of the ballad type bolster up the mediocre story, which is on the farcical side. Leon Errol and Walter Catlett handle the comedy fairly well, provoking considerable laughter with some of their antics. The picture lacks human appeal, giving the characters little chance to awaken one's sympathy. The treatment follows a formula, and it ends in a manner expected by the audience:—

Broadway producer Walter Catlett persuades a group of Texas hotel owners to finance a show designed to promote their state. To assure the show's success, he agrees to star Frances Langford, a singer. During rehearsals, Robert Paige, a Texas song writer, arrives in New York intent upon selling his songs to Catlett. But Catlett, and Leon Errol, his part-

ner, have other plans. To awaken public interest in the show, they ask Paige to pose as a wealthy Texas cattle king, who buys up all tickets for the opening week, because of his adoration for Frances. Paige agrees, hoping that it will give him a chance to inject his songs into the show. Frances, who disliked publicity stunts, threatens to leave the show. But Catlett convinces her that it is not a stunt, and that Paige is really a cattle king. During opening week Paige frequently stops the show and requests Frances to sing his songs. They become friendly and fall in love. One morning Frances learns the truth when she overhears Catlett berate Paige for stopping the show. Peeved, she leaves town and goes into hiding. Meanwhile George Cleveland, Paige's uncle and head of the hotel owners, had come to New York to check up on Catlett. Paige, thinking that Frances had been kidnapped, learns of her whereabouts from Joe Sawyer, an underworld character. Acting on Frances' orders, three men at the house where she was staying refuse to allow Paige in. A terrific battle ensues, and he emerges the victor. Convinced that Paige loves her, Frances returns to the theatre in time for the evening performance, thus appeasing Cleveland, who had threatened to arrest Catlett if he failed to put on the show.

Warren Wilson wrote the screen play, Paul Malvern produced it, and Frank Woodruff directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Pilot No. 5" with Franchot Tone, Marsha Hunt and Gene Kelly

(MGM, no release date set; time, 70 min.)

Moderately entertaining program fare. The story concerns the background of an aviator, whose life story is depicted in flashback fashion when his fellow fliers relate to his commanding officer the events that led to his becoming a fearless pilot. Except for the climax, in which Franchot Tone deliberately crashes his plane into a Japanese aircraft carrier, there is no war action. Although it is rather a wordy film, it manages to hold one's interest to a fair degree.

The story opens up on a blasted jungle air-field, where the exhausted remnants of a flying squadron await the return of enemy bombers. Save for one plane, hastily improvised from the wreckage of others, they are defenseless. Major Steve Geray calls for a volunteer to fly the lone fighter to intercept the Japanese bombers. The five remaining pilots, Franchot Tone, Gene Kelly, Alan Baxter, Van Johnson, and Dick Simmons, volunteer instantly. Geray selects Tone for the task. Because of the divergence of opinion among the fliers as to the character of Tone, the Major draws from each the story of Tone as he knew him. He learns that Tone had graduated from law school with high honors, and had formed a partnership with Kelly, whose uncle was an influential politician. Tone and Kelly had affiliated themselves with Governor Howard Freeman, an unscrupulous politician, who proved to be a vicious influence in his state. Tone continued his association with Freeman despite the pleas of Marsha Hunt, his sweetheart, that he detach himself. When Freeman's ruthlessness became unbearable to him, Tone decided to extricate himself from the political machine. But it was too late to save his reputation with the public, or to save the remnants of Marsha's love for him. Although he had been responsible for Freeman's overthrow, the public never forgave Tone for having been a part of the machine. Marsha had left him, and Kelly had broken the partnership. Tone's attempts to join the air force were at first rejected, because of the poor recommendations about him. But because Lieutenant Baxter at the enlistment office admired his persistence, Tone was finally accepted. Before he left for the South Pacific, Tone and Marsha had become reconciled. As the pilots finish telling the story to the Major, Tone advises by radio that his gas supply had become exhausted, and that he had sighted a Japanese carrier. Tone sacrifices his life when he plunges his plane into the carrier and destroys it.

David Hertz wrote the screen play, B. P. Fineman produced it, and George Sidney directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

SOMETHING CAN BE DONE ABOUT THE CONSENT DECREE

Following is a recent release, sent out by Abram F. Myers, chief counsel of Allied States Association:

"STATUS OF CONSENT DECREE

"Some of the current articles tend to confuse rather than to clarify this important question.

"It is obvious that if no steps are taken by the Department of Justice or the defendants the decree in its present form will remain in effect indefinitely. No one ever asserted the contrary.

"Emphasizing this obvious fact in the headlines is calculated to create the impression among exhibitors that the decree is a fixture and that nothing can be done about it.

"That something can be done about it is established by the provisions of the decree and the several statements of the Department of Justice concerning it.

"DECREE CONTEMPLATES FURTHER ACTION.

"Sec. XXI provides, in part:

"Petitioner, by its counsel, has represented to the Court that the public interest requires that the provisions of this decree shall operate for a trial period of three years from the date of entry hereof. Petitioner has further represented to the Court, and each of the consenting defendants has consented to the entry of this decree upon the condition, that Petitioner will not for a period of three years after the entry of this decree, either in this action or any other action or proceeding against any such defendant seek . . . to divorce the production or distribution of motion pictures from their exhibitors; or to dissolve any such defendant . . ." (Italics added.)

"By Sec. XXIII jurisdiction of the case was retained by the Court for the purpose, among others, of

"(a) Enabling any of the parties to this decree to apply to the Court at any time for such orders and directions as may be necessary or appropriate for the construction or carrying out of this decree, for the enforcement of compliance therewith, and for the punishment of violations thereof. . . .

"(d) Enabling any of the parties to this decree to apply to the Court at any time more than three years after the date of the entry of this decree for any modification thereof."

"DEPARTMENT SO INTERPRETED IT

"The Department of Justice issued a press release on November 29, 1940 announcing the entry of the consent decree. This and other statements by the Department made it plain that the decree was intended to be provisional; that a test period of three years was established in which to judge of its effectiveness; that if at the end of the test period the desired results had not been obtained, the Government would seek divestiture and dissolution as prayed for in the petition.

"In order to give this arbitration system a fair trial, the Government agrees not to seek divorcement or dissolution . . . for a period of three years."

"After outlining the beneficial results which the Department hoped would be achieved under the decree, the release proceeded:

"'. . . If these results are not obtained after a reasonable trial period, there will be no alternative for the Government but to proceed with the litigation and press for a revision of the entire industry structure in accordance with the prayer of the petition.' (Italics added.)

"The release concluded as follows:

"The Department proposes to keep a constant check on the operation of the decree. The records of the arbitration system are subject to inspection by the Department at all times, as are the records of the defendants relating to the operation of the decree. A unit will be established in the Anti-Trust Division to keep in touch with the operation of the decree and to handle complaints with respect to it. As a result of the information thereby obtained, the Department will be in a position to determine what further action, if any, need be taken at the end of the trial period."

"On January 16, 1941 the Department announced the establishment of the Motion Picture Unit under the direction of Robert L. Wright. The release included the following:

"The unit will attempt to observe and evaluate the effect of the decree on the industry as a whole by a study of the following factors, among others:

"1. The extent to which arbitration under the decree succeeds in fairly adjusting the specific exhibitor complaints of which the Department has knowledge.

"2. The general effect of the decree, and particularly the new method of selling, on competition between independent theatres, unaffiliated circuits and affiliated circuits.

"3. The effect of the decree, and particularly the new method of selling, on competition in producing and distributing films.

"The principal data upon which the unit will rely in making such studies must necessarily come from the following sources:

"1. Information in the Department's own files supplied by complaining exhibitors, the consenting defendants and other members of the industry.

"2. The records of the consenting defendants which are accessible to it under the terms of the consent decree.

"3. The records of the arbitration proceedings and their disposition under the decree kept by the American Arbitration Association and the Appeals Board.

"At the end of the three-year trial period, the unit will attempt to answer the following questions and make specific recommendations based upon the answers to these questions:

"1. Has the three-year trial of the consent decree demonstrated that the competition required by the Sherman Act can be achieved in the motion picture industry without securing the divorcement of production and distribution from exhibition?

"2. If it has, must the decree be modified in other respects in order to achieve such competition in the industry?

"3. If it must be so modified, what are the specific modifications which will achieve that end?"

"DEPARTMENT ADMITS DECREE IS INADEQUATE

"On January 22, 1942, the Department made public a preliminary report on the activities and experience of the Motion Picture Unit. In this release the purpose of the unit was defined as follows:

"Function of the unit is to observe the effects of the decree and submit recommendations as to its future operation at the end of a three-year trial period ending November 20, 1943."

"The general tenor of this report was critical and it wound up with the following conclusion:

"The Department on the basis of its experience to date, has not attempted to finally judge the net result of the decree in solving the problems it was intended to solve. The decree has certainly already supplied some relief to a substantial number of exhibitors from certain unfair trade practices. It has not yet demonstrated that film licensing discriminations inherent in the ownership of theatres by distributors may be effectively remedied by measures short of divorcement."

"Certainly there has been nothing in the experience under the decree since the date of that report to alter the opinion thus expressed.

"CONCLUSIONS

"These conclusions are warranted:

"1. After November 20, 1943 the Government will have the right either by an application in the present case or by a new complaint to seek to divorce production and distribution from exhibition and to dissolve the affiliated circuits.

"2. As an incident of this right the Government will have authority (if, based on experience, it feels warranted in doing so) to consider amendments to the decree short of divestiture or dissolution which might be agreeable to the consenting defendants.

"It is too early to predict what course the Department may follow. However, if it follows Course No. 2 it is inconceivable that it will not take into account the proposals of the independent exhibitors who have such an important stake in the matter. To ignore the rights of the exhibitors in the circumstances would be a negation of the very principles for which the country is now fighting.

"Regional associations should apprise their members of the substance of this bulletin."

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THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PRODUCT CONSERVATION LIES WITH THE DISTRIBUTORS

With each passing week the production end of the business finds itself operating under additional handicaps, which must be accepted under war-time conditions.

The marked reduction in the number of features released thus far this year, as compared with the same period last year, and the tendency of some of the major distributors to withhold the release of product until such a time as they consider that the market is ready to absorb it, are indicative of the industry's adjustment to a war-time policy of product conservation.

Although there has been a reduction in the number of releases, production has been maintained at a level equivalent to 1942, and the different companies have accumulated a considerable backlog of pictures, which they are holding in reserve for the day when production schedules may have to be curtailed to a level that is far below the present level.

Because of the uncertainty of future production schedules, exhibitors should do their utmost to cooperate in this conservation of product by playing their pictures for longer periods, provided, of course, that the drawing power of the pictures has not diminished before the regular playing time has expired. Where possible, exhibitors operating on a double feature policy should eliminate the supporting feature when they play pictures that are strong enough to draw on a single-feature basis.

We cannot get away from the fact that, so long as this war continues, the number of pictures that will be available for exhibition will constantly decrease. By adopting sensible policies now, the exhibitors will help to postpone the day of a product shortage—it may even be averted altogether.

It is on the distributor, however, on whom the real responsibility rests if we are to avert a picture shortage. Few exhibitors, certainly not the wise ones, would refuse to grant additional time to their pictures if the conditions under which they bought the pictures were such as would put holdovers on a profitable basis.

In many cases the high rentals and percentages demanded of the exhibitors require that their theatres be filled to capacity if they are to remain with a profit. When attendance drops to normal, the exhibitor, of necessity, must move out the film, for, if he has to pay the high rentals or percentages out of normal receipts, he finds that he cannot meet operating expenses, or make up for the losses he had suffered on the "clucks."

If the distributors would take into consideration the many factors an exhibitor has to contend with before he can realize a profit on his over-all business, and if they would adjust their film rentals accordingly, they will find the exhibitors more than willing to give their product extended playing time, thus preventing a film from being withdrawn from its potential market before its possible gross is exhausted.

CAN THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE RESTORE THE EXHIBITORS' FAITH?

In its February 2 issue, *Film Daily* reported that Robert L. Wright, of the Department of Justice, was making a complete survey of the status of the Consent Decree and the functioning of the motion picture industry's arbitration system. The object of the survey, it was assumed, was that Wright's findings would have some bearing on the fate of the decree after November 20 of this year.

That Wright has either completed or made much headway with his survey is indicated in a report by weekly *Variety*, in its April 7 issue, which states:

"Film industry can forget any hopes it may have that the Department of Justice will be satisfied with a continuance of the motion picture consent decree after its expiration date, Nov. 20. The Anti-Trust Division under its new chief, Assistant Attorney General Tom C. Clark, who succeeded Thurman W. Arnold, is not at all satisfied with the decree. It expects to go hot and heavy after something more stringent, according to Robert L. Wright, special assistant to the Attorney General. Wright is handling the consent decree matter.

"Just what the Justice Department expects to seek will probably be announced by June, Wright indicated. He now has under study the possibility of a suit for complete divorce between exhibition and distribution of films, and also complete elimination of block booking in favor of single picture selling.

"That does not mean, Wright made clear, that these are what the D. of J. will finally settle on. The only thing certain at present is that Anti-Trust feels the consent decree is not strong enough medicine."

Apparently Mr. Wright has found that, under the Decree, the producers are not doing right by the exhibitors. This paper will watch with interest the manner in which Wright expects to remedy matters, for it recalls that the Department of Justice did little to protect the rights of the exhibitors when the Consent Decree was drafted.

Perhaps Wright will do for the exhibitors more than was done for them in the past. If he does, he will restore the exhibitors' confidence in government agencies.

"Something to Shout About"
with Janet Blair, Don Ameche, Jack Oakie
and William Gaxton
(Columbia, Feb. 25; time, 90 min.)

This back-stage musical comedy may do better than average business, for there exists today a definite audience desire for films that are void of war themes; however, because of its many dull spots, it is only a fair entertainment. Except for some of the song and dance numbers, there is nothing novel in the treatment, and the story is particularly trite. Highlight of the film is the song, "You're So Nice to Come Home To," which is currently one of the nation's favorite tunes. Jack Oakie's broad comedy, and specialty numbers by Hazel Scott, colored pianist, and "The Bricklayers," a clever dog act, offer entertaining sequences. Little can be said for Gregory Ratoff's direction:—

William Gaxton, a broken-down Broadway producer, addicted to drink, accepts an offer to produce a show financed by Cobina Wright, Jr., a wealthy divorcee. Cobina, who can neither sing, dance, nor act, stipulates that she be starred. Don Ameche, press agent for the show, meets up with Janet Blair, a singing teacher from Altoona, and becomes interested in her and her songs. Jack Oakie, who operated the theatrical boarding house where Ameche lived, suggests that Janet be brought to Gaxton for an audition. Positive that Janet's talents would guarantee a hit show, Gaxton schemes with Ameche to get Cobina out of the way until opening night. Ameche manages to have Cobina and himself arrested by a small-town sheriff, who holds them incommunicado. Unaware of this scheme, Janet joins the show. On the eve of the show's opening, the sheriff learns of the trick, and releases his prisoners. Cobina, in a fury, returns to New York and demands that Janet be discharged. Gaxton bows to her wishes. Heartbroken, Janet returns to Altoona. Opening night is a miserable failure because of Cobina's poor work. Gaxton closes the show, and goes to a rest sanitarium. Ameche and Oakie, in despair, hit upon an idea that would take advantage of the two weeks' theatre rental that Gaxton had paid. They plan to produce a vaudeville show with the performers in Oakie's boarding house. While Oakie rehearses the acts, Ameche goes to Altoona and induces Janet to return to New York. With Gaxton billed as the producer, the show is a huge success. Learning that his name is connected with a vaudeville show, Gaxton rushes to the theatre, arriving there during the last act. His protests are laughed at by the audience, which believes it to be part of the act. Realizing that the show is a hit, Gaxton takes a bow.

Lou Breslow and Edward Eliscu wrote the screen play, and Gregory Ratoff produced and directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"White Savage" with Maria Montez,
Jon Hall and Sabu
(Universal, April 23; time, 75 min.)

Fair. It is another Universal excursion into the realm of fancy, with the same trio that was starred in "Arabian Nights." This picture, too, has been photographed in Technicolor. It does not, however, compare with its predecessor either in story or production values. The film has as its setting an imaginary island in the South Seas, and the story is a mix-

ture of idyllic romance and wild melodramatics, with murder and robbery thrown in for good measure. An earthquake towards the end provides a thrilling sequence. Sidney Toler, in a characterization reminiscent of the role he played in the "Charlie Chan" pictures, furnishes the comedy. It is a colorful film with plenty of action, and it should please a good many patrons:—

Thomas Gomez, unscrupulous operator of a trading post on Port Coral, seeks to gain possession of a gold-lined sacred pool, located on Temple Island, a small isle ruled over by Princess Maria Montez. To this end, Gomez cultivates the friendship of Turhan Bey, Maria's wayward brother. Barred from fishing in the vicinity of the island, Jon Hall, a shark fisherman, seeks an interview with Maria, hoping to gain a concession from her. He enlists the aid of Sabu, son of Maria's maid. Sabu invites him to the island and arranges the meeting. Maria impulsively falls in love with Hall, and permits him to kiss her. But when he broaches the subject of fishing concessions, she concludes that he sought to outwit her, and orders him off the island. Through a mischievous trick, Sabu brings them together again, and they become reconciled. Gomez, in an attempt to gain legal possession of Temple Island, inveigles Bey into a crooked card game, betting cash against the value of the deed to the island. Hall learns of the scheme and joins the game. He outwits Gomez, and wins the deed. Angry because of his loss, Bey strikes Hall. The following day, while the natives celebrate Maria's engagement to Hall, Gomez arrives at the island with Bey's body, and accuses Hall of the murder. Hall is imprisoned, but Sabu helps him to escape. With the aid of Maria, and Sidney Toler, a Chinese detective, Hall proves that Gomez had paid a beach-comber to commit the murder. Gomez and his henchmen seize the island in an attempt to take the gold out of the sacred pool. But an earthquake rocks the island, toppling the Princess' temple, and they lose their lives in the ruins.

Richard Brooks wrote the screen play, George Wagner produced it, and Arthur Lubin directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Corregidor" with Elissa Landi,
Otto Kruger and Donald Woods

(Producers Releasing Corp., Mar. 29; time, 73 min.)

A good program war melodrama. Because of its subject matter, and the exploitation value of its title, "Corregidor" should do good business. It is strong enough to top a double bill in many situations, and it certainly has its place as a secondary feature in most situations. Obviously produced on an increased budget, this war melodrama has the truthful qualities demanded of a film that treats of a gripping chapter in American history. While the picture is dynamic and convincing in the war-action sequences, its love story, revolving around the familiar triangle theme, fails to register. Rick Vallin and Wanda McKay are appealing in a secondary romance. The performances are generally good. The film ends with the narration of an epic poem, especially written for this picture, by Alfred Noyes, the English poet:—

Dr. Elissa Landi journeys from the United States to Luzon to marry Dr. Otto Kruger, a student of

tropical diseases. Years before, Elissa had been in love with Dr. Donald Woods, who was now an Army surgeon stationed in Manila. Woods had married, but he was now a widower. Elissa assures Kruger that her love for Woods is dead. Joyful, Kruger arranges the wedding. As the ceremony is concluded, Japanese planes blast the village. The war had begun. As sole survivors of the attack, the newlyweds pack a few things and head into the jungle. They meet up with a group of Filipino scouts led by Sergeants Rick Vallin and Frank Jenks. Together they make their way to Corregidor, fighting off attacks by Jap snipers throughout their long journey. There, Elissa and Kruger meet Woods. Elissa is assigned to handle the nurses, and Kruger joins Woods in surgery. Aware that the love between Elissa and Woods had been rekindled, Kruger offers to step aside. But they will not have it. The intensity of the Japanese attacks increase, and eventually the supplies and ammunition are exhausted. A direct bomb hit on a field dressing station kills Kruger. Headquarters orders the evacuation of all nurses. Elissa boards a plane for Australia, hopeful that some day she and Woods will be reunited.

Doris Malloy and Edgar Ulmer wrote the screen play, Dixon R. Harwin and Edgar Ulmer produced it, and William Nigh directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Good Morning, Judge"
with Dennis O'Keefe and Louise Allbritton
(Universal, May 7; time, 68 min.)

A good program comedy with some music. It moves along at a steady pace, and holds one consistently amused. Many of the situations are laugh provoking, particularly the ones in which the different characters drink cocktails containing "knockout drops"; the spectator, not knowing which one of the characters had taken the "lethal concoction," is held in suspense while waiting for the drink to take effect. Another amusing situation is where Dennis O'Keefe enters a Turkish Baths unaware that it was ladies' day. The story is silly, but it does not become tiresome. Mary Beth Hughes sings pleasantly:—

Sudden success comes to Dennis O'Keefe, a music publisher, and Mary Beth Hughes, a singer, when "Spellbound" becomes a hit tune. Their happiness vanishes, however, when Frank Faylen and Ralph Peters, song-writers, sue O'Keefe for damages, claiming that the tune had been plagiarized. The song-writers retain Louise Allbritton as their attorney. Samuel S. Hinds, O'Keefe's attorney, seeks a settlement, but Louise considers his offer too small. On the day before the trial, O'Keefe accidentally meets Louise and, using an assumed name, invites her to dinner. He arranges with J. Carroll Naish, the cafe owner, to put knockout drops in Louise's grapejuice. The following day Louise arrives in court with a hangover, and requests a postponement. The judge grants it to her, but reprimands her for her tipsy condition. Louise plots her revenge. She obtains a transcription of O'Keefe offering her clients a bribe, and plans to introduce the record in court. They meet once again on the day before the trial. Both believe that they have the other out-smarted, and agree to another date that evening. This time Louise is accidentally given one of Naish's knockout drinks. She fails to

appear in court, and the case is decided against her. Louise avenges herself by having O'Keefe arrested on a trumped-up charge of annoying women in a Turkish Baths. An outraged judge fines him five hundred dollars. They meet again at a night club, where Mary, who had designs on O'Keefe, announces her engagement to him. At O'Keefe's suggestion the three have a farewell drink. This time O'Keefe accidentally receives a knockout drink. Mary accuses Louise of "poisoning" him. A fight starts, and all end up in court. Charges and counter charges are unraveled, with Louise and O'Keefe finally falling into each other's arms.

Maurice Geraghty and Warren Wilson wrote the screen play, Paul Malvern produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Murder in Times Square" with
Edmund Lowe and Marguerite Chapman
(Columbia, April 1; time, 65 min.)

An interesting murder mystery melodrama of program grade. Suspense is fairly well sustained, and the discovery of the murderer is rather logically worked out. Though the hero is first shown as a conceited, self-styled genius, later he becomes a sympathetic character because of his pleasant manner. The action is steady, and there is some comedy relief. Since the identity of the murderer is not made known until the very end, one's interest is held throughout. The film does not resort to spooky or eerie atmosphere:—

After opening night of his new show, Edmund Lowe, an actor-playwright, entertains at a night club Veda Ann Borg, his leading lady, and Marguerite Chapman, his publicity agent. Lowe is approached by Esther Dale, a Broadway vagrant, who threatens him with bad luck when he refuses to give her money. After the party, Lowe escorts Marguerite to her hotel, where he knocks down a drunkard who lurches against her. When the man fails to rise, Esther, who had been following Lowe, accuses him of murder. But at that moment Bruce Bennet, a cowboy friend of Lowe's, happens on the scene, and points out that snake-bite had caused the death. Because his show dealt with snake-bite murders, Lowe is arrested, but he gains his release when Detective William Wright fails to prove the charge. At a party at Lowe's apartment, Leslie Denison informs Lowe that he is the husband of Veda, and that she had left him to carry on an affair with Gerald Mohr, a dramatic critic. Bitter, Lowe quarrels with Veda. She leaves him. Denison is later found dead, a victim of snake-bite. When, soon after, Veda and Gerald die of the same causes, Esther convinces the police that Lowe is the killer. Marguerite and Bennett help Lowe to escape before Wright can arrest him. Esther comes to Marguerite's apartment while Lowe is hiding there, and offers to clear Lowe and name the murderer for ten thousand dollars. Lowe, Marguerite, and Bennett follow her and discover evidence proving that John Litel, a Broadway physician, who had been in love with Veda, had committed the murders out of jealousy. Aided by the police, Lowe sets a trap and captures Litel.

Paul Gangelin wrote the screen play, Colbert Clark produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

Adult entertainment.

A STUDY IN ECONOMICS

In a recent bulletin sent out by Allied States Association, Abram F. Myers, its General Counsel, takes issue with the producer-distributors for their failure to come into line with the government's program for the control and stabilization of prices.

Quoting from passages in the Office of War Information's "Battle Stations for All," which deals with the dangers of uncontrolled prices, and from remarks by President Roosevelt and James F. Byrnes, Director of the Office of Economic Stabilization, on the same subject, Mr. Myers draws a comparison between the "economic policy of the nation" and the "economic policy of the producer-distributors."

He points out that "the prices (rentals) demanded by the producers and distributors for their motion picture films have been and are 'in an inflationary spiral.' Their net profits (i.e., their profits *after* deductions for taxes) are soaring at an unprecedented rate and form a weird contrast to the declining profits of the patriotic industries that are devoting themselves wholly to the war effort."

In a table showing the taxes and net profits of six distributors for the years 1941 and 1942, Myers points out that "their net profits during 1942 increased about 44% notwithstanding an increase in their taxes of approximately 180%."

Myers continues under the heading, "Congress Leaves a Loophole":

"In his letter to Congress in July 1941, asking for price control legislation, President Roosevelt wrote:

"Economic sacrifices there will be and we must bear them cheerfully. But we are determined that the sacrifice of one shall not be the profit of another."

"In 'Battle Stations for All' the Office of War Information says:

"The same wild prices that could reduce harshly the living standards of these millions would also permit a few to reap fat profits. This spectacle of profiteering would sap morale at home, in factories, on the battlefield.

"We are determined this shall not happen."

"Yet when the Emergency Price Control Bill was being considered in the Senate, that body, on motion of Senator Downey (D. Cal.), adopted an amendment excluding motion pictures from its operation. Hence, the producer-distributors are free to charge whatever prices they please, so far as the price regulations are concerned.

"In Canada film rentals were included in the price regulations although, in practice, this has not afforded much protection to the exhibitors.

"According to the *Film Daily* for March 26, 1943, films have been included in the Australian price fixation regulations.

"One would suppose that the producer-distributors in recognition of the special privileges enjoyed under the laws of the United States would feel morally obligated not to push prices to scandalous heights or to so jack up their earnings as to make the whole industry a target for special legislation. Allied States Association has issued numerous warnings and appeals on the subject addressed to the responsible heads of the producing and distributing companies, but all have been ignored.

"DRAINING OFF THE PROFITS

"Not many years ago the motion picture theatre owner was an independent business man. He bargained for his film on a flat rental basis. If he struck a good bargain, he stood to make a profit.

"Today the major distributors are insisting that the exhibitors 'play percentage' on the kind of pictures on which they formerly made a profit. This means that the exhibitor, who must pay all the expenses (interest, rent, wages, equipment, electricity, etc.), must accept the distributor as a limited partner during the engagement of a percentage picture and pay as film rental, a large percentage of the gross receipts.

"There are several varieties of percentage deals: Straight percentage, guarantee plus percentage, percentage to a split figure beyond which the percentage increases, and the so-called 'sliding scale.'

"Percentage playing and all the refinements thereof are simply devices to restrict the exhibitor to a small commission (if they do not, in fact, inflict a loss) for showing pictures in his theatre, and to enable the distributors to drain off for themselves all or virtually all of the profits.

"Less than 10 years ago a representative of the producer-distributors, testifying before a Congressional Committee, stated that the average exhibitor paid for his film (that is, all of his film) about 25% of his gross receipts. This he thought to be a fair division of the box-office dollar, else he would not have suggested it. Although wages and all other items of expense borne by the exhibitors have greatly increased in the meantime, the distributors now are demanding that they pay 35%, 40% and even 50% for feature pictures alone.

"TIME FOR PLAIN TALK

"If that 'equality of sacrifice' or 'equality of privilege' mentioned in 'Battle Stations for All' is to be maintained, it is high time that Government officials called the Movie Barons to task.

"The President should remind them that when he said 'the sacrifice of one should not be profit of another' he meant them, not merely the other fellow.

"Judge Byrnes should remind them that by their profiteering practices they are endangering the whole stabilization program and are setting a bad example for other industries.

"Elmer Davis should send each producer-distributor an autographed copy of 'Battle Stations for All' with the request that they heed its warning."

A WELCOME BLAST AGAINST HOLLYWOOD'S LACK OF GOOD TASTE

"The Stars and Stripes," an army overseas newspaper, has editorially protested against the lack of "good taste" in pictures designed for foreign consumption. The editorial says partly:

"It is hard to see yourself portrayed on the screen as a 'bloody hero' when you know that you're surrounded by men, women and children who definitely proved that they are brave beyond any ability of Hollywood to portray."

This is just another example of Hollywood's failure to use the power of the screen judiciously.

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Must Soldiers Be "Yes Men"?

Both *Motion Picture Herald* and its colleague, *Motion Picture Daily*, have taken exception to the editorial spanking that was given to Hollywood recently by *The Stars and Stripes*, an army overseas newspaper, published in London.

This soldiers' newspaper editorially urged the elimination of films that instill into the minds of people, who should be our friends, distrust of Americans. Pointing out that Hollywood's excessive use of cinematic flag-waving is "sickening," the editorial stated: "We would appreciate the Hays office more if they spent less time cutting swear words from the scripts of potential war movies, and gave a little more thought to 'good taste' in movie scripts designed for foreign consumption."

It added: "It is hard to see yourself portrayed on the screen as a 'bloody hero' when you know you're surrounded by men, women and children who definitely proved that they are brave beyond the ability of Hollywood to portray."

These are sound criticisms.

Yet *Motion Picture Herald* says of the editorial: "It might be indicated to *The Stars and Stripes*, and its gripes, that there is only one censorship of the motion picture in the United States, which is the wartime Government censorship of pictures for export.

"The motion picture is having quite a hand in selling the bonds and stamps that finance the payroll of *The Stars and Stripes*."

Notice that the *Herald* does not deny the justification of *The Stars and Stripes'* complaint. It merely passes the buck by indicating that once a film gets by the Government censors, Hollywood's responsibility ceases. It then has the audacity to say, in effect: "Don't talk so loud. Some one may hear you. After all, we're helping to support you, and you shouldn't say things that may reflect on us, even if they are true."

Apparently the *Herald* is not concerned with the fact that it is directing its remarks to American soldiers, men who are making it possible for the motion picture industry to exercise its privilege and duty to sell bonds and stamps. Nor has it taken into consideration the fact that one of the main things these boys are fighting for is freedom of expression.

Motion Picture Daily approaches the matter from a different angle, but with equally poor taste. Says the *Daily*:

"Curious it is that these eager young men who edit the A.E.F. daily in London, *The Stars and Stripes*,

should launch a broadcast attack on American pictures . . . these young men who are rollicking in a bath of printer's ink at the expense of the American taxpayer say that flag-waving is 'sickening.'"

Referring to *The Stars and Stripes'* remarks about the Hays office spending less time cutting swear words from scripts, the *Daily* adds: "These young men are apparently so unfamiliar with the tastes of the nation that they do not know that gutter language is not wanted by the American motion picture public—they also do not know that minds far more mature—and seemingly more representative of American thought, are now giving and have long been giving most careful attention to the content of films for export—strange isn't it—that *The Stars and Stripes* would be permitted to do this kind of a petty smear job on the American film which by common consent of the experts is doing such a great wartime job?"

The *Daily* ends its tirade by stating that it had established, by checking with the War Department, that the opinions expressed in army newspapers, of which *The Stars and Stripes* is one of many, are those of the soldier editors, and do not represent the War Department's opinions. Army papers are official only to the extent of formal War Department announcements. "But what have these arty, uninformed—and perhaps, prejudiced notions, got to do with the business of an army newspaper?" queries the *Daily*.

Let us examine the *Motion Picture Daily's* remarks in their order of statement. It first disparages the editorial staff of *The Stars and Stripes* by branding them as "young men who are rollicking in a bath of printer's ink at the expense of the American taxpayer." Is *Motion Picture Daily* trying to tell us that these American soldiers, who have sacrificed whatever privileges they enjoyed as civilians to serve their country, are hoodwinking the public? That while we in the motion picture industry go through the "awful" ordeal of paying taxes with which to "support" them, they make merry by sniping at us? The *Daily's* observation is as classic as the one in which the housewife complains to her husband about having worked over a hot stove all day long while he had been working in a cool sewer.

Next the *Daily* literally accuses these boys of fostering "gutter language" on the American public. Apparently not satisfied with having branded them as men who are taking advantage of the American taxpayer, the *Daily* now indicates that they are ill-bred. Some one should tell the *Daily* that part of the Amer-

(Continued on last page)

"Crash Dive" with Tyrone Power, Anne Baxter and Dana Andrews

(20th Century-Fox, no release date set; time, 105 min.)

Good mass entertainment. Although it offers little that is original in the way of a story, this war melodrama should do exceptionally good business; in addition to the marquee value of Tyrone Power, it has romance, comedy, fast action, suspense and thrills—all of which have been expertly blended in a manner to suit popular taste. The submarine warfare sequences are not only thrilling, but instructive as well. The special effects work is particularly fine, and the Technicolor photography adds to the realism. Most of the excitement occurs towards the finish, where the submarine and its crew completely demolish a secret Nazi mine-laying base. These heroics are, of course, strictly in the Hollywood manner, but they do hold the spectator tense. Much of the footage is given over to the amusing and hectic romance between Anne Baxter and Power, with Dana Andrews, Power's superior officer, forming the third part of the romantic triangle. There is considerable human interest and comedy in a by-plot concerning James Gleason, as a crew member, and Ben Carter, as the colored mess attendant:—

Lieut. Tyrone Power is summoned to New London, where he is assigned as executive officer on a submarine commanded by Lieut. Dana Andrews. En route by train to Washington on leave, Power meets Anne Baxter, teacher in a New London girls' school, whose berth he occupies by mistake. Unaware that Anne was Andrews' fiancée, Power pursues her until she reluctantly agrees to a dinner date. Upon her return to New London, Anne, frightened by her gay experience in Washington, asks Andrews to hasten their marriage plans. On their first cruise together, Power and Andrews are cool toward each other, but they soon recognize each other's ability, and become fast friends. After a victorious cruise, Andrews is summoned to Washington. Meanwhile Power continues his pursuit of Anne, and she eventually falls in love with him. Andrews returns from Washington with orders to sail on a search for a secret German naval base. He informs Power that he first intends to get married, and shows him a photograph of Anne. Dumbfounded, Power goes to meet Anne at the Officers' Club. Andrews, too, goes to the club, arriving in time to overhear Anne express her love for Power, and her intention to tell him the truth. Andrews is bitter when they sail that night, and refuses to listen to Power's explanations. By following an enemy ship, Andrews guides the submarine to the secret base. He orders Power to lead a landing party ashore to blow up installations. The raid is successful, and all return safely except James Gleason, who sacrifices his life protecting Power. As the submarine departs, Andrews is wounded by a German shell. While Power aids him, he graciously gives up his claim to Anne.

Jo Swerling wrote the screen play, Milten Sperling produced it, and Archie Mayo directed it. The cast includes Dame May Whitty, Henry Morgan, Ben Carter, John Archer, Florence Lake, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"They Came to Blow Up America" with George Sanders and Anna Sten

(20th Century-Fox, no release date set; time, 73 min.)

A fairly good program spy melodrama, the story of which is based on the landings last year of eight Nazi saboteurs, who were brought by U-Boats to the Long Island, N. Y., and Florida shores. In flashback method, the action revolves around an FBI agent, who, posing as a member of the German-American Bund, goes to Berlin and enters a saboteur school. The plot is somewhat far-fetched, but the action is fast-moving, and the constant danger to the hero holds one in suspense. The romantic interest is mild:—

Returning home after an absence of three years, George Sanders is rebuffed by Ludwig Stossel, his German-American father, for having joined the Bund. Actually, Sanders was an FBI agent, who attended Bund meetings to learn of Germany's plans. Following the death of Fred Nurney, a Bund member, who had been ordered to return to Germany

to attend a saboteur school, Sanders is assigned to impersonate the man. In Berlin, Sanders is accepted as Nurney, and learns much of Germany's sabotage plans. Sanders troubles begin with the arrival in Berlin of Anna Sten, Nurney's widow, who was unaware of her husband's death. She immediately becomes suspicious of Sanders, and threatens to expose him. He persuades her to wait until the following day for a full explanation, then hurries to Dennis Hoey, Gestapo chief, and reports that Anna is mentally unbalanced, and that she even denies he is her husband. The following day Anna visits Hoey and charges Sanders with being a fake. Convinced of her insanity, Hoey orders her confined. After falling in love with Poldy Dur, a German girl, Sanders learns that she is involved in an underground movement. To divert suspicion from himself, he is compelled to turn her over to the Gestapo. Hoey orders her taken to a detention camp. Later, in a daring rescue, Sanders redeems himself by killing the storm troopers guarding Poldy, and driving her to a place of safety. Sanders is chosen to head the first group of saboteurs going to the United States by submarine. Meanwhile in Milwaukee, Sanders' father had learned of his true activities, and foolishly reveals this information to Sig Ruman, a family friend, who radios the Gestapo. But before the Gestapo can act, Sanders lands on Long Island, and helps the FBI to round up the saboteurs.

Aubrey Wisberg wrote the screen play, Lee Marcus produced it, and Edward Ludwig directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"I Escaped from the Gestapo" with Dean Jagger, John Carradine and Mary Brian

(Monogram, May 14; time, 74 min.)

Patrons who enjoy spy melodramas will find this engrossing program fare. It differs somewhat from the general run of pictures of this type in that, instead of concentrating on the activities of the spies, it shows the regeneration of a forger, who, when he becomes innocently involved with the ring, uses his talents to outwit and trap it. One is in sympathy with the hero because of his courage in the face of danger. The acting and the production values are good, and the direction intelligent. The romantic interest is mild:—

A Nazi spy ring, headed secretly by Edward Keane, a seemingly respectable citizen, aids Dean Jagger, a forger, to escape from prison. Unaware that his benefactors were spies, Jagger accompanies them to an amusement park where John Carradine, the owner locks him in a cell-like room and orders him to engrave plates to make counterfeit passports and bonds, which the spies used in their operations. Realizing that he was in the hands of saboteurs, Jagger refuses. But Carradine compels him to agree when he threatens harm to his mother. Although guarded constantly, Jagger manages to make friends with Mary Brian, who worked in one of the park's concessions, but was not a member of the spy ring. His attempts to get a message to her are unsuccessful. Desperate, Jagger decides to use his forging talents to bring his predicament to the attention of the FBI; he engraves a message on a plate that makes counterfeit money. At Jagger's suggestion, Bill Henry, a young Nazi assigned to guard him, appropriates the spurious money and disappears. The money eventually comes to the attention of the FBI, which recognizes Jagger's handiwork and discovers his mother's address engraved on the bills. Acting quickly, the FBI captures a spy guarding Jagger's mother. Meanwhile Carradine had discovered the plate bearing the message; he plans a final act of sabotage before abandoning the hideout. But before he can carry out his plan, the FBI arrives at the amusement park and rounds up the gang. Jagger returns to prison to finish out his sentence, assured by the FBI that he will be rewarded for bravery. Mary promises to wait for him.

Henry Blanford and Wallace Sullivan wrote the screen play, Maurice and Franklin King produced it, and Harold Young directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Spitfire" with Leslie Howard and David Niven

(RKO, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

Produced in England, this is an interesting biographical drama, well made, and expertly acted. Though it should please class audiences, its reception by the masses is questionable; unlike the title suggests, there is no fast action, except for a few of the opening scenes. Covering the last fifteen years in the life of R. J. Mitchell, designer of Britain's famous "Spitfire" fighting plane, the film depicts his struggle against the indifference of industrialists, who believed that his ideas were far-fetched, and his ultimate success, at the sacrifice of his life, in getting his "Spitfire" built. Despite the slowness of the action, one's interest does not wane. The story is told in flashback, and the period is prior to the present war. Other than Leslie Howard and David Niven, the members of the cast are unknown in this country:—

R. J. Mitchell (Leslie Howard), an aircraft designer, dreamily foresees the time when he will create a streamlined airplane based on a sea gull's graceful outline and flight. Though still designing amphibian biplanes, Mitchell clings to his idea of a streamlined monoplane, capable of attaining speeds regarded by his associates as fantastic. Mitchell is joined by Geoffrey Crisp (David Niven), an unemployed ex-RAF officer, who becomes his test pilot. With the passing years, Mitchell has many successes and failures. Eventually, however, his biplanes win for Britain permanent possession of the Schneider Cup. Accompanied by Diana (Rosamund John), his wife, and Crisp, Mitchell takes a well-earned holiday in Germany. While he is a guest at the famous Richtofen Club, Mitchell learns from an arrogant young Nazi that the glider movement in Germany is merely a cover for the development of a great German Air Force in defiance of the Versailles Treaty. Disturbed, Mitchell cuts his holiday short, and returns home to England. He determines to give his country the best fighting plane the world had ever seen. His work is hampered by technical prejudices and the limited budget allowed him. Lady Huston (Tonie Edgar Bruce), an eccentric noblewoman, gives him financial aid. Mitchell becomes ill from overwork, and is informed by his doctors that he has an incurable malady. They warn him that he has but one year to live unless he takes a complete rest. Without hesitating he decides to sacrifice himself and, in less than the year allotted to him, produces the first "Spitfire." He sees it in flight just before he dies.

Anatole De Grunwald and Miles Malleeson wrote the screen play, and Leslie Howard produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Taxi, Mister" with William Bendix, Joe Sawyer and Grace Bradley

(United Artists, April 16; time, 45 min.)

This third of the streamlined comedies dealing with the adventures of the "Brooklyn McGuerins" is by far the best in the series; it contains many laughs, and should prove entertaining to most audiences. This time the story goes back to the prohibition era to relate how William Bendix and Joe Sawyer got their start in the taxicab business, and how Bendix courted Grace Bradley, who, at that time, was a burlesque queen. Although the story makes little sense, one is kept amused by the nit-wit actions and the comical situations. Jack Norton, as a drunk, is extremely funny. The film will make a good supporting feature in situations where something light is needed to round out a double bill:—

William Bendix and Joe Sawyer, co-owners of a taxicab, ambitiously look forward to the day when they will own a fleet of taxicabs. Bendix falls in love with Grace Bradley, a burlesque queen, arousing the displeasure of Sheldon Leonard, a leading gangster, who kept his identity secret by operating as the "Frisco Ghost." Leonard decides to get rid

of Bendix without resorting to rough stuff. While Bendix and Sawyer take part in a sandlot baseball game, Leonard has his henchmen fill their cab with bootleg liquor and a tommy gun, then notifies the police. The boys are arrested and subjected to a third degree; fingerprints found on the tommy gun had been identified as those of the "Frisco Ghost." The boys are finally released after convincing the police that they did not know the mysterious gangster. Bendix goes to Leonard's night club, where Grace entertained, and tells her of his arrest. She promises not to let the incident affect their love. When he sees Leonard, he tells him, too, of his experience, and asks him if he knows the "Frisco Ghost." Realizing that through his fingerprints on the gun the police will be sure to catch him, Leonard forces Bendix, at the point of a gun, to get into his cab and drive him away. Bendix obeys, but the motor refuses to start. The police arrive on the scene, and a gun battle develops. Leonard is finally captured when he is felled by a monkey wrench thrown by Bendix. Inconsolable over the loss of his taxicab, which was wrecked during the melee, Bendix's pain turns to joy when the police announce that he will receive a \$10,000 reward, enabling him to buy a fleet of cabs and to marry Grace.

Earle Snell and Clarence Marks wrote the screen play, Fred Guiol produced it, and Kurt Neumann directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Shantytown" with Mary Lee, John Archer and Marjorie Lord

(Republic, April 20; time, 66 min.)

Pleasant program entertainment. It has human interest, comedy, and quite a few musical numbers of the popular variety. Mary Lee is a refreshing young lady, and the film allows her ample opportunity to display her singing and acting talents, which are the picture's chief assets. Considerable laughter is provoked by Billy Gilbert, as an Italian baker, who helps Mary in her efforts to bring happiness into the lives of a harassed young couple. Matty Malneck's orchestra furnishes the music. The production values are good:—

Mary Lee, a 'teen age tomboy, lives in a ramshackle boarding house operated by Ann Revere, her mother, and J. Frank Hamilton, her lazy step-father. When John Archer and Marjorie Lord, his wife, move into the house, Mary resolves to become a "lady" like Marjorie, whom she admired. Though innocently involved in a crime ring headed by Noel Madison, Archer was wanted by the police. For many months he and his wife had moved from town to town to evade capture; but now that Marjorie was expecting a baby, Archer decides to settle down. He secures steady employment at a garage. Madison learns of Archer's whereabouts, visits him, and demands that he drive a getaway car in a projected bank robbery. Archer refuses, but Madison forces him to follow his orders. The robbery is unsuccessful, and Madison is captured. Archer, however, makes his getaway together with Frank Jenks, Madison's aide. In the ensuing chase, Jenks is wounded and captured. Madison implicates Archer in the crime and he is widely sought by the police. Meanwhile Marjorie, frantic with worry, becomes gravely ill. To get word to Archer, Mary joins a radio amateur hour and, in the midst of the broadcast, pleads with Archer to come home because of Marjorie's illness. Archer hears her plea, and returns. Mary's step-father, eager to win a reward, notifies the police. But Mary persuades the police to wait a few hours until Marjorie's baby is born, so that Archer may see the child before he goes to jail. By the time the baby is born, the police receive word that Jenks had confessed, absolving Archer of all blame.

Olive Cooper wrote the screen play, Harry Grey produced it, and Joseph Stanley directed it. The cast includes Harry Davenport, Cliff Nazarro, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

ican public is made up of the mothers, wives, sisters, and sweethearts of these boys, and fostering language that would in any way offend those who are dear to them is not a part of the American soldier's make up. One does not have to strain one's intelligence to see that the *Daily* has deliberately distorted the meaning and intent of *The Stars and Stripes'* remark about the Hays office spending less time cutting swear words from scripts. That remark was used to emphasize the fact that the Hays office is more concerned with swear words, the damage of which is not near as serious as the damage that is done by Hollywood's over-indulgence in flag-waving and wild heroics.

Adding to its charges of fostering "gutter language" and having a gay time at the expense of the American taxpayer, the *Daily* now tells us that these soldier boys lack mature minds, and that the minds they do possess are not as representative of American thought as are the mature minds of those who have long been giving careful attention to the content of films for export. Since the *Daily* does not specify to whom these mature minds belong, HARRISON'S REPORTS would like to know who, if not an American soldier, is representative of American thought? Is it the producer, director, or script writer, who, without regard for relation of plot, drags in a patriotic sequence by the ear in order to give a picture a timely or patriotic angle? These soldier boys, more than the "mature minds" in Hollywood and the War Department, represent the people to whom motion pictures are directed. As part of an audience, they react to pictures in the same manner that the average theatre-goer in foreign countries reacts. They can tell us, therefore, what pleases the potential audience, and what stirs and thrills them—also, what sickens them. The "mature minds" can only guess at what will stir and what will sicken.

The *Daily* then goes on to label *The Stars and Stripes'* criticisms "a petty smear job on the American film." If this army newspaper is guilty of such a dastardly "crime," then it has as accomplices some of the most outstanding organizations, which, in addition to many illustrious personages, have long condemned films that are detrimental to cordial relations between friendly nations and ourselves. And HARRISON'S REPORTS is happy to admit complicity. If any one is guilty of "smear" tactics, it is *Motion Picture Daily*, because of its attack on a group of men whose sensitivities were affected by the lack of "good taste" shown in many films.

In what seems to be an attempt to minimize the sting of *The Stars and Stripes'* criticisms, the *Daily* makes quite a fuss about the fact that the opinions expressed by soldier editors of army newspapers do not represent the opinions of the War Department. So what? Since when is it necessary for criticisms to have an official stamp in order that they be worthy of attention?

The abuse heaped upon *The Stars and Stripes* by *Motion Picture Daily* and *Motion Picture Herald* is unwarranted, in bad taste, and a reflection upon the industry as a whole.

HARRISON'S REPORTS considers the views of *The Stars and Stripes* as constructive criticism. Hollywood would serve the interests of the nation well if it should give this criticism the consideration and study it deserves.

WISHFUL THINKING

Stating that "you'll never have unity until you first achieve confidence," our contemporary, "Chick" Lewis, in the April 17 issue of *Showmen's Trade Review*, adds:

"If ever this industry needed more confidence among its several branches and the individuals who represent those branches, now is the time. Intra-industry squabbles and recriminations, accusations, charges and counter-charges—these are the things that destroy confidence and impede progress."

Urging that there be "a sensible ironing out of our problems," "Chick" points out that "if all of us are willing to contribute a share towards building confidence the task would be neither too difficult nor impossible to achieve."

Oddly enough, we find in the April 17 issue of the *New York World-Telegram* an editorial comment, which, though relating to a different matter, is applicable to "Chick's" observations. Says the *World-Telegram*:

"Might be a good idea for each individual to start right now, take stock of his own selfishness and decide what ought to go into discard. If he finds difficulty in discovering wherein he is selfish, other folks will be delighted to show him. Unselfishly delighted. More than delighted."

"Remember the Quaker who said, in effect, to his wife: 'All the world is selfish, Dorcas, except thee and me; and sometimes, Dorcas, I think even thee is just a little selfish.'"

"Good old story—which is likely to stay good, we guess, through war and peace, planning and replanning, generation after generation, era after era, world without end."

Need we add more?

ALLIED'S BOARD TO MEET IN DETROIT

According to a recent bulletin sent out by M. A. Rosenberg, president of Allied States Association, Allied's board of directors will meet in Detroit on May 5 and 6, at which time they will consider, among other things, what steps to take with respect to the Consent Decree.

They will decide whether to propose amendments for the existing decree, or to advocate that the case be tried so that, if the Government wins, the court can write a decree similar to that outlined by Judge Davies in the Crescent case. Should the board decide to propose changes, it will be necessary to decide what those proposals shall be, and how and when they shall be presented.

The board also will consider the allocations by the War Production Board of raw stock, and will endeavor to figure out whether, with the reduction in the number of feature pictures being released, there is any excuse for the current print shortage.

The board will again turn its attention to film prices, including the price of re-issues, concerning which it may authorize action to supplement the information service now being carried on.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Yearly Subscription Rates:

United States	\$15.00
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1270 SIXTH AVENUE

Room 1812

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Published Weekly by
Harrison's Reports, Inc.,
Publisher

P. S. HARRISON, Editor

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, MAY 1, 1943

No. 18

MISLEADING ADVERTISING

"All opening records fall at N. Y. Paramount," is the heading on a two-page insert in the April 26 issue of *Film Daily* advertising Paramount's "China," starring Alan Ladd and Loretta Young.

Of the four photographs shown on the first page of the insert, two depict the patrons crowding around the box-office and being held in line by the police; the third shows a police squad car, which had come to reinforce the police; and the fourth shows a store front that had been smashed by the pushing crowd.

Each photo has a different sub-title reading as follows: "Line starts forming at 4 A.M.—grows to 4000 by opening . . . Comes the dawn—comes the cops! Police called at 5:30 . . . 80 reserves arrive at 7 A.M. to handle block-long crowd . . . Opening advanced to 8:30—4000 seats fill like magic." On the photographs is printed: "They came through rain—and cops—and squad cars—and busted store fronts—to stage the biggest, wildest premiere in Broadway history!"

The second page of the insert is devoted to similar statements, including: "4000 long brave Broadway storm from dawn to midnight to hail 'The most amazing star since Valentino.'"

There is no question about the fact that the New York Paramount Theatre is enjoying the most sensational business in its history ever since the opening of "China." But there is a question as to whether this sensational business is the result of "China's" merits or of Alan Ladd's drawing power, which is admittedly very good; nowhere in the advertisement is there an indication that, in addition to the picture, the Paramount Theatre is presenting a stage show headed by Harry James and his orchestra, acclaimed by many as the most popular band in the country. Judging by the thousands of frenzied "jitterbugs" that have been storming the Paramount Theatre's doors, there seems to be little doubt of James' popularity.

The *New York World-Telegram*, in a lengthy commentary on the Paramount's sensational business, had this to say in part: "Hep cats from all the boroughs, with glazed eyes and jerking legs and knee length watch chains over which they tripped, trooped back . . . for the third straight day . . . out of the factories and the grocery stores and the class rooms to whistle, stomp, moan, jerk and shiver to the trumpeting of Harry James." Nowhere in the article is there a mention of "China."

The *Motion Picture Herald*, too, in its April 24 issue, under the heading of "Riot on Broadway," said in part: "The Easter holidays, and ace trumpeter Harry James, combined this week to bring record crowds to Broadway and distinction to the Paramount Theatre." The rest of the article is devoted to an account of how the "James' devotees" arrived at

the theatre at an early hour, and the policemen that were required to hold them in check. Nowhere in the article does the *Herald* say anything about "China."

An examination of the advertisement discloses one significant fact: Great pains have been taken to exclude from the backgrounds of the photographs that part of the marquee and of posters, which would in any way indicate that Harry James was heading a stage show as an added attraction.

Obviously, Paramount is taking advantage of the drawing power of Harry James to give "China" a boost, thereby leading the exhibitor to believe that the Paramount Theatre is doing sensational business because "China" is supposedly an exceptional film.

"China" is no more than a fairly good melodrama, of which a good deal of the action is highly implausible. Because of Alan Ladd, who has become quite a favorite, the film may do better than average business.

The fact that Paramount has seen fit to resort to this sort of an advertising expedient is in itself an admission that the film is lacking in that which sets good films apart from the ordinary ones.

WILL THE NEW BROOM SWEEP CLEAN?

Film Daily reports that, in an address before the American Business Congress on April 22, Assistant Attorney General Tom C. Clark, who succeeded Thurman Arnold as chief of the Department of Justice's Anti-trust Division, declared that "American business has nothing to fear so long as it plays the game fairly and according to the rules."

Mentioning that Clark made no specific reference to the motion picture industry, even though his predecessor was deeply interested in film affairs, *Film Daily* credits Clark with saying that there would be no "witch-hunting, no uprooting of American customs or traditions, but there will be practical, swift, hard-hitting law enforcement."

If one is to judge by performance, Clark's assertion seems to be the real thing.

The very first case to come under his supervision involved the Dry Goods Association of New York and fifteen of the city's leading department stores, which were fined a total of eighty thousand dollars for having conspired to boycott the *New York Times* in order to avoid an increase in that paper's advertising rates.

The Anti-trust Division's handling of this case was unusual; it proceeded against the defendants in spite of the fact that the *New York Times* did not file a complaint and, instead of going through the usual process of securing an indictment, it instituted the
(Continued on last page)

"Captive Wild Woman" with Acquanetta, John Carradine and Evelyn Ankers

(Universal, June 4; time, 61 min.)

This is another one of those implausible horror melodramas, suitable as a supporting feature in situations where this type of entertainment is acceptable. This time we find a mad brain specialist transforming a female ape into an attractive young woman, who, of all things, falls in love with an animal trainer. A good deal of the footage is given over to stock shots of circus backgrounds and lion taming, but it has been skillfully blended in with the action. Acquanetta, a new screen personality, is effective as the ape-woman. The action provides plenty of thrills and suspense:

Evelyn Ankers takes Martha MacVicar, her sister, who suffers from a glandular disorder, to a sanatorium for treatment by Dr. John Carradine, a brain specialist. Later, at the office of Lloyd Corrigan, circus owner, Carradine meets Milburn Stone, Evelyn's fiance, who was an animal trainer. Carradine shows unusual interest in an ape trained by Stone and, on the following day, bribes a handler to steal the animal. Carradine takes the ape to his laboratory, and informs Fay Helm, his nurse, that he intended to transform it into a human being by transfusions and glandular extractions from Martha. When Fay refuses to assist him, Carradine kills her, and uses her brain in the operation. The experiment is successful, and the ape turns into an attractive girl (Acquanetta). Carradine brings her to the circus grounds to watch her reactions to animals. The animals recoil in fright when she approaches. Amazed by her strange powers, Stone hires her as an assistant in the act. All goes well until one day Acquanetta sees Stone embrace Evelyn. Fired with jealousy, that night Acquanetta finds herself changing back into an ape because of the emotional strain. She enters Evelyn's bedroom, intending to kill her, but Evelyn's screams frighten her, and she escapes to the sanatorium. Sensing that the creature in her room was Acquanetta, and that Carradine had some connection with the affair, Evelyn goes to the sanatorium. There, Carradine, bent on restoring the ape to human form, attempts to kill Evelyn for her brain. But Evelyn manages to release the ape, which kills Carradine, and makes its way to the circus. It arrives just as an electrical storm causes the animals to stampede. The ape rushes into the lions cage to save Stone, but it is shot and killed by a handler, who misunderstood its motive.

Henry Sucher and Griffin Jay wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and Edward Dmytryk directed it.

Too horrifying for children.

"Swing Your Partner" with Lulubelle & Scotty, Vera Vague and Esther Dale

(Republic, May 12; time, 72 min.)

A pleasant program picture. There is nothing original about the story, nor is the treatment unusual, but it has enough comedy and music to satisfy audiences in small-town and neighborhood theatres. The action revolves around an elderly spinster, miserly owner of a large dairy plant, whose regeneration takes place soon after she works at the plant under the same conditions as her employees. There are some good comedy situations here and there, and the music is pleasing. The romantic interest is mild:—

In the midst of a testimonial broadcast given by the employees of a large dairy farm to Esther Dale, the hard-bitten owner, Lulubelle, Scotty, and Vera Vague, employees, secretly cut in on the broadcast and tell Miss Dale what they really think of her and the poor conditions under which they worked. Furious because her six vice-presidents are unable to locate the offenders, Miss Dale, decides to take matters into her own hands. Together with Dale Evans, her secretary, she goes to the farm where, under assumed names, both secure jobs. Richard Lane, the farm manager, treats Miss Dale shabbily, but "Pappy" Cheshire, the personnel

manager, sympathizes with her. Under his influence she changes, realizing that her employees are oppressed. Meanwhile the vice-presidents back in the home office, unaware that Miss Dale was at the farm, employ Roger Clark, a young detective, and Ransom Sherman, his partner, to go to the plant to solve the mystery. In order to gain the information he seeks, Clark, too, becomes an employee. He falls in love with Miss Evans. When Scotty inadvertently learns that Clark is a detective, he warns Miss Evans. She purposely leads him to believe that Miss Dale was responsible for the "wildcat" broadcast. Clark reports this to Lane, who promptly discharges Miss Dale. Lulubelle, Scotty, and Vera rush to the city to confess, only to find that Miss Dale is their employer. Won over entirely to the employees' side, Miss Dale changes her organizational tactics. Lane is discharged, Scotty is made the new manager, and "Pappy" is installed as a vice-president, along with Clark, who had become reconciled with Miss Evans.

Dorrell and Stuart McGowan wrote the screen play, Armand Schaefer produced it, and Frank McDonald directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Presenting Lily Mars" with Judy Garland and Van Heflin

(MGM, no release date set; time, 103 min.)

Good entertainment. It should go over with the masses, for it has plentiful comedy, music, and romance. The story is not new; it is of the familiar "small-town girl makes good in big city" variety. But it is pleasant, filled with human appeal, and one is in sympathy with the characters. Both Judy Garland and Marta Eggerth sing a number of tuneful melodies effectively. Although their names give the film added marquee value, Bob Crosby's and Tommy Dorsey's orchestras play a small part in the action, and little footage is given over to their music. The direction and the performances are fine. The finale is impressive:—

Judy Garland, a small-town girl, who wants to become an actress, is encouraged by Spring Byington, her mother, Patricia Barker, Janet Chapman, and Annabelle Logan, her younger sisters, and Douglas Croft, her younger brother. Miss Byington supported her small family with the money she earned as a milliner. When Judy delivers a hat to Fay Bainter, she meets Van Heflin, Miss Bainter's son, a famous theatrical producer. Heflin bluntly refuses to give her an audition. Judy steals the script of his new play, and compels him to come to her home to retrieve it. As he walks in, she enacts a scene from Macbeth. When she finishes, Heflin advises her to forget about the theatre, and warns her to stop pestering him. That night, at a party honoring Marta Eggerth, his star, Heflin discovers that Judy had somehow joined in the festivities. He escorts her outside. Undaunted, Judy goes to New York and succeeds in gaining entrance to the theatre where Heflin is rehearsing his new show. The following day Heflin discovers her, fatigued and hungry, and he gives her a small role in the play. He soon falls in love with Judy, and breaks a date with Marta in order to take her dancing. At a night club, Judy is asked to sing, and she does a burlesque of Marta singing a song. Marta enters the night club just as Judy finishes mimicking her. As a result, Marta quits the show, and Heflin gives Judy the lead. On opening night, however, Heflin realizes that Judy lacks experience, and he arranges with Marta to resume the lead. He tells Judy that she can quit and hate him for the rest of her life, or she can determine to play her original small role to perfection. Judy swallows her pride and plays her bit like a professional. Delighted with her, Heflin produces a show to fit Judy's talents. The critics acclaim her.

Richard Connell and Gladys Lehman wrote the screen play, Joseph Pasternak produced it, and Norman Taurog directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Reveille with Beverly" with Ann Miller, William Wright and Dick Purcell

(Columbia, February 4; time, 78 min.)

Entertaining program fare for those who enjoy "swing" music; it will more than satisfy the "jitterbug" trade, for it has a number of popular songs played by the orchestras of Bob Crosby, Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Freddie Slack. In addition there is the dancing of Ann Miller; one song, which fails to impress, by Frank Sinatra; and the harmonizing of the Mills Brothers. A highlight of the film is a routine by the Radio Rogues in which they impersonate famous stars. In between these numbers is an extremely thin story that will not tax the imagination of even a "jitterbug":

Ann Miller, switchboard operator at a radio station, takes advantage of an opportunity to be on a recorded program at an early morning hour. Sensing which bands are the favorites of the soldiers in army camps, Ann plays "swing" music records, and her program becomes an immediate sensation. At an army camp nearby, William Wright and Dick Purcell, rookies, learn that one of their buddies is Larry Parks, Ann's younger brother. They arrange with Larry to meet Ann. Purcell, Wright's chauffeur in civilian life, complains that Wright stands a better chance with Ann because of his wealth. To prove to Purcell that this is not necessarily so, Wright switches identities with him. Both men meet and become interested in Ann. She seems to prefer Wright, even though she believes that Purcell is the wealthy son of one of her radio station's biggest sponsors. Larry finally tells Ann the truth, and she decides to have some fun with them. During a personal appearance at the camp, where she puts on a big show, Ann tricks them into admitting publicly that they were faking. During the show, Ann does a dance routine and, on its completion, she discovers that the auditorium is empty; the soldiers had been ordered to move. So that her radio listeners will not suspect what had happened, Ann continues with the program. She broadcasts a message to Wright and Purcell, telling them that she loves them both.

Howard J. Green, Jack Henley, and Albert Duffy wrote the screen play, Sam White produced it, and Charles Barton directed it. The cast includes Franklin Pangborn, Tim Ryan, Wally Vernon, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Lady of Burlesque" with Barbara Stanwyck and Michael O'Shea

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 91 min.)

A good backstage murder mystery melodrama; it should prove a treat for the followers of this type of story, as well as for those who enjoy sophisticated entertainment. The story is an adaptation of Gypsy Rose Lee's "The G-String Murders," and the action revolves around a burlesque company, which becomes involved in the murder of two of its principals. Virtually every one in the troupe is suspected of the crime, and the identity of the murderer is concealed so well that when it is finally divulged it comes as a complete surprise. The action is interspersed with musical numbers and burlesque skits. Some of the dialogue and situations are quite comical—as well as sexy:—

The success of Barbara Stanwyck, "strip-tease" dancer in a burlesque show, is marred by the mysterious backstage murders of Victoria Faust, mercenary prima donna of the company, and Stephanie Bachelor, a bogus princess, whose role in the show had been taken over by Barbara. Among the suspects are Gloria Dickson, who had fought with Victoria over Frank Fenton, singer with the show; Gerald Mohr, a gangster, who resented Victoria's attentions to Fenton; J. Edward Bromberg, the producer, who had been blackmailed by Stephanie; Michael O'Shea, a comedian, on whose person had been found the "G-string" with which Victoria had been strangled; and Barbara, who had found Victoria's body shortly after having had a row with her.

Inspector Charles Dingle bears down on Barbara, indicating that she had committed the crimes, but O'Shea, who admired Barbara despite her apparent dislike for him, comes quickly to her defense. Barbara's attitude towards him softens. Dingle's investigation discloses that Gloria and Fenton were secretly married, and that Fenton had spent the night with Stephanie previous to her murder. Moreover, Victoria had been poisoned, not strangled, and she had withdrawn \$10,000 from the bank on the day of her murder. The money had disappeared. Mohr, who had vanished after the murders, is found by the police, and falls to his death in an attempted escape. Dingle, however, proves that Mohr did not commit the murders, and tricks Fenton into confessing that he and Stephanie had poisoned Victoria to steal her money. Fenton, however, denies strangling Stephanie. Barbara clears up the mystery when she traps Frank Conroy, the doorman, once a famous opera singer, who strangled Stephanie because he resented the fact that burlesque queens romped on the stage on which he had once been a sensation.

James Gunn wrote the screen play, Hunt Stromberg produced it, and William A. Wellman directed it.

Definitely not for children.

"Above Suspicion" with Joan Crawford and Fred MacMurray

(MGM, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

Fair. This spy melodrama, the action of which takes place just prior to the present war, does not rise above the level of program fare; it will need the popularity of the novel, from which the story is adapted, and the drawing power of the stars, to put it across. The beginning is pretty interesting, but it gradually peters out and ends in a somewhat unconvincing fashion. Not only is the story far-fetched, but the treatment lacks originality, and the plot tends to confuse one because of the injection of numerous incidents that are left unexplained. The cast tries hard to make something of their roles, but they are hampered by poor material:—

As they prepare to leave for the Continent on a honeymoon, Fred MacMurray, American professor at Oxford, and Joan Crawford, his bride, are entrusted with a secret mission by the British Foreign Office, which asks them to establish contact with a British agent, who had in his possession the secret of Germany's magnetic mines. The agent had disappeared mysteriously in Southern Germany. In Paris, Joan and MacMurray learn from other agents that they must travel to Nurnberg. Arriving there, they are approached by Conrad Veidt, a well-mannered Austrian, who offers his services as a guide. They turn him down. An innkeeper gives them a book on the life of Liszt in which they find further instructions. That evening they attend a concert during which a high Nazi official is slain. Held for questioning, the two are finally released when Basil Rathbone, a former German student at Oxford, vouches for MacMurray. After following many clues, Joan and MacMurray learn that the plans were in the possession of Dr. Reginald Owen. They make their way to Owen's home, only to find that Owen had disappeared, and that Rathbone and Veidt were occupying the premises. After an exchange of pleasantries, they leave the house accompanied by Veidt, who reveals that he, too, is a British agent, and that Dr. Owen was held prisoner in an upstairs room of his home. They steal back into the house and release Owen. Aware that they were now known to the Gestapo, Joan and MacMurray separate, and arrange to meet in Innsbruck. But the plan is foiled by Rathbone, who apprehends Joan. When MacMurray and Veidt learn of this, they go to her rescue. They find her in a prison camp being questioned and tortured by Rathbone. They kill Rathbone and, using his official stamp, visé their passports and escape across the border to safety.

Keith Winter, Melville Baker, and Patricia Coleman wrote the screen play, Victor Saville produced it, and Richard Thorpe directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

action by filing an information. The defendants entered a plea of *nolo contendere*, and the court fined each of them five thousand dollars.

A short time ago, Clark revealed that an attorney, who represents several defendants in the Griffith case, had visited him regarding a settlement of that case. It is generally believed that the Crescent decision, which was favorable to the Government, prompted this move for a consent decree. Clark is credited with making it plain that the Government was fully prepared to press the suit if the proposals submitted by the Griffith case defendants do not satisfy his department.

As Ben Shlyen, editor-in-chief of *Boxoffice*, pointed out in a recent editorial, "Clark seems not only to have firmly grasped 'the big stick' but also to have put some spikes into it."

Some of the statements made recently by Robert L. Wright, head of the Anti-trust Division's Motion Picture Unit, which is handling the Consent Decree, indicate that the Government is far from satisfied with the way the Decree has worked out. Since "practical, swift, hard-hitting law enforcement" is what Clark believes in, and with that to guide Wright, perhaps the independent exhibitors will soon see the day when they will be able to crawl out from under the monopolistic heel of the major companies.

EXHIBITORS MUST NOW USE CAUTION IN THE HIRING OF NEW EMPLOYEES

The wage stabilization and job transfer regulations announced by the War Manpower Commission on April 17, freeing workers in essential industries to their jobs, and prohibiting, under certain conditions, workers from transferring from essential to non-essential industries, make it necessary for the exhibitor to exercise the greatest care in the hiring of new employees, lest he be penalized for violating the regulations.

That part of the order affecting the exhibitor reads as follows:

"No employer shall hire for work in a non-essential activity any employee engaged in essential work, within the past 30 days, if the new salary rate exceeds that paid in an essential job."

The War Manpower Commission has admitted that there are many "loopholes" in the regulations, but indicated that amendments, which will serve to eliminate such "loopholes," will be issued from time to time.

Since much clarification seems to be needed with respect to the regulations as a whole, the exhibitor should demand of a future employee a statement from his or her last employer indicating the date on which employment was terminated, the rate of wages paid, and whether or not the employee was engaged in an essential activity. In the absence of such a statement, the exhibitor should insist upon the employee giving him a sworn affidavit with respect to his last place of employment, if any.

If in doubt as to whether or not the hiring of a particular person will violate the regulations, the exhibitor should contact his regional War Manpower Commission office for a ruling.

Employers found guilty of violating the regulations are subject to a fine of up to one thousand dollars or imprisonment of one year, or both, and the wages

paid to the employee will not be considered deductible for income tax purposes. The employee, too, is subject to a fine of one thousand dollars or imprisonment for one year, or both.

GUARD AGAINST FIRES IN YOUR THEATRES

Officials of the War Production Board's Service Equipment Division have issued a notice warning exhibitors that, because of the scarcity of materials, it will be difficult to obtain replacement of equipment, or to rebuild theatres, damaged by fire.

Pointing out that "fires have been damaging or completely destroying theatres at an alarmingly increasing rate," the division stated: "Reconstruction of theatres destroyed by fire is very doubtful under present circumstances. This puts the burden of responsibility as to whether or not present theatre plants are to be maintained for the duration flatly on the shoulders of the theatre exhibitor or operator."

Elsewhere the notice said: "Some exhibitors maintain that a shortage of repair parts for their projection and sound equipment results in development of unavoidable fire hazards. This is not true. Provision has been made for assuring availability of necessary repair and maintenance parts. It is up to exhibitors and operators to keep their projection and sound equipment in perfect repair at all times," preventing such fire hazards as worn projector parts, absence of fire-proof storage cabinets, etc."

The division issued the following nine rules for fire protection:

"1. Pull the main entrance switch at the conclusion of each day's operation. One employee should be delegated to this task.

"2. Do not permit an accumulation of rubbish in closet, poster rooms, boiler or furnace rooms.

"3. Appliance cords for vacuum cleaners, work lights or other portable apparatus should be inspected daily and, if found defective, repaired immediately.

"4. Smoking in a projection booth should not be permitted under any circumstances.

"5. At the conclusion of each day's run, all films should be removed from the projector magazine or rewriter and placed in the film storage cabinet. Trailers and ad films should never be left exposed.

"6. The use of electric or other portable heaters should be avoided while handling film.

"7. Porthole shutters should be tested frequently to see that the shutters slide freely. The entire porthole shutter system should be properly fused to insure closing instantaneously in case of fire.

"8. Have local fire officials make regular inspections from roof to basement. Their recommendations should be followed implicitly.

"9. Faulty electrical contacts and switchboard connections cause the majority of theatre fires. The entire electrical system should be checked frequently and contacts carefully tightened to eliminate this fire hazard."

The continued operation of your theatre depends on the care and attention you are willing to devote to it. Post the War Production Board's safety rules in your projection booth, and in other convenient places where your staff will be sure to see them.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, MAY 8, 1943

No. 19

A LACK OF CONSIDERATION FOR THE PUBLIC'S STATE OF MIND

An example of poor judgment in the selection of story material is to be found in MGM's "Dr. Gillespie's Criminal Case," a review of which appears elsewhere in this issue.

A by-plot in the story concerns William Lundigan, as a soldier, who returns from overseas after having lost in battle both his legs. Lionel Barrymore, as "Dr. Gillespie," takes it upon himself to rehabilitate Lundigan, and endeavors to convince him that he can still make something of his life by adapting himself to the use of artificial limbs. Bemoaning his fate, and bitter at the thought that he will have to go through life depending on the aid of others, Lundigan refuses to cooperate. Barrymore, however, through applied psychology, finally persuades him to try out the artificial legs, and the lad eventually learns how to use them. During all this there are a number of scenes that show Lundigan holding on to two horizontal bars and, with his face registering excruciating pain, making an attempt to walk.

Just think of the effect these scenes will have on the parents, wives, and sweethearts of soldiers. Every one of them, while looking at Lundigan, will be thinking of their loved one, and the possibility that he may return from the war in a like condition.

Will some one please tell this writer what entertainment values the producer could have possibly seen in so morbid a subject? Is there not enough grief in the hearts of people without adding to it? Common sense should have made the producer realize that practically all picture-goers have at least one loved one serving in the armed forces, and that their state of mind is not such as to permit them to get pleasure out of scenes that show a soldier returning from the war suffering in mind and body.

We cannot get away from the fact that many of our soldiers are going to come back from the war crippled for life. But who wants to be reminded of it? Such scenes are not entertainment; they serve only to torture further the minds of an over-troubled people.

Realism in pictures has its place when it serves a purpose. In war pictures, for example, the injuring or killing of soldiers during battle scenes, or while otherwise heroically risking their lives, add a realistic touch to the action and give the film the desired dramatic and inspirational effect. Audiences generally find such scenes acceptable, though brutal, for it is the sort of thing they expect to see in pictures of that type. In

this latest of the "Dr. Gillespie" pictures, however, that part of the film having to do with Lundigan's rehabilitation is not only uncalled for, because it is just another instance in which the war is dragged in by the ear to give a picture a timely angle, but it is also the sort of realism that we can do without; instead of inspiring, it disconcerts one.

Our civilians are undergoing great mental stress in these times, and our motion pictures should not add to this strain unnecessarily. The producers should realize that depressing pictures do not arouse in the picture-goers a desire to attend theatres frequently. Such pictures tend to make them more discriminating and, before making up their minds to visit a theatre, many of them will first go to the trouble of finding out if the picture is entertaining. This condition has already made itself felt. Exhibitors throughout the country report that many of their steady patrons are fed up with war pictures and, unless they are sure that the picture playing will afford them a few hours of relaxation, they make it a point to stay away from the theatre.

As a source of entertainment for the masses, the motion picture has no equal. Such a position places on the selectors of story material a responsibility, which, in these troubled days, is much greater than it has ever been; on their judgment depends whether the picture-goer is to obtain the relaxation he seeks and needs—a privilege for which he pays an admission price—or whether he is to leave the theatre depressed, and in an extremely unhappy frame of mind.

AN ACT WORTH EMULATING

Variety reports that, as a contribution to the current campaign for the sale of war bonds and stamps, all motion picture theatres in Minneapolis utilized their regular newspaper advertising space for one day to urge the purchase of these securities. Not one of the advertisements carried mention of the theatre's program for that day.

Although *Variety* makes no mention of it, this paper assumes that the different newspapers printed in the news columns of their movie sections a listing of the theatres' programs. If not, they should have done so.

HARRISON'S REPORTS feels sure that the good will gained by the exhibitors in Minneapolis is of inestimable value. It is an act worth emulating by theatres in every town and city in the country.

"Mission to Moscow" with Walter Huston and Ann Harding

(Warner Bros., release date not set; time, 123 min.)

A thoroughly engrossing documentary-like version of former Ambassador Joseph E. Davies' book of the same title. It is exceptionally well directed and performed, and it holds one's attention from beginning to end. But it is suitable only for a certain type audience; that is, a mature-minded audience, the kind that can give its undivided attention to the dialogue in order to grasp and appreciate the film's message. In all probability the film will fare better in the big cities; it may not do so well at the box-office in the small towns, by reason of the fact that the subject matter has little appeal for the younger generation, and the action is too slow. The picture follows closely the pattern of Mr. Davies' book, and it aims to create a better understanding of Russia by the American people. The story, however, will probably stir up much controversy. With the exception of Walter Huston, whose portrayal of Mr. Davies is convincing, the cast has been selected for their close resemblance to the leaders of the different countries. Ann Harding has little to do, but she is charming as Mrs. Davies. Outstanding in the supporting cast is Oscar Homolka, who gives a fine impersonation of Maxim Litvinov.

Following a lengthy prologue by Mr. Davies, who tells the spectator of his personal background, and of his purpose in writing "Mission to Moscow," the story begins with President Roosevelt (Capt. Jack Young) calling Davies (Walter Huston) to Washington, and requesting that he go to Russia as his Ambassador to learn the truth about the Russian people. Accompanied by his wife (Ann Harding) and his daughter (Eleanor Parker), Davies departs for Moscow. En route he visits Berlin, where he takes notice of Hitler's influence on the people. Arriving in Russia, Davies is met by Kalinin (Vladimir Sokoloff) and Litvinov (Oscar Homolka). Davies' sincerity and fairness win him the respect of Russia's leaders, and they invite him to make a tour of the country to see for himself its vast resources and the progress of its industries. Within a short time he learns much of Russia, and becomes convinced that its leaders were responsible men who sought to avoid war, but were preparing to meet it. After the Moscow "purge" trials, Davies starts for home, stopping over in England to discuss with Winston Churchill (Dudley Field Malone) the Nazi peril. He reaches the United States just as Germany declares war on Poland. After reporting to the President, Davies makes a whirlwind tour of the country in an effort to combat isolationism.

A highlight of the film is the "purge" trial, during which it is shown that some of Russia's leaders conspired with Trotsky to weaken the country so that Germany and Japan could defeat it.

Howard Kock wrote the screen play, Robert Buckner produced it, and Michael Curtiz directed it. The cast includes Richard Travis, Helmut Dantine, Victor Francen, Jerome Cowan, Kurt Katch, Minor Watson, Henry Daniell, and many other featured players.

Morally suitable for all.

"Gildersleeve's Bad Day" with Harold Peary

(RKO, June 4; time, 63 min.)

Minor program fare. The followers of "Gildersleeve's" adventures may find it amusing, but others will be bored. This time Harold Peary, as the blustering "Gildersleeve," unwittingly accepts a bribe from a gangster, after serving on a jury that had acquitted him. The resulting complications are a hodge-podge of slapstick incidents, few of which provoke much more than a grin. The story is thin, and the treatment routine. It is strictly for small-town and neighborhood theatres as the lower half of a mid-week double bill:—

Gildersleeve (Harold Peary) is selected to serve on a jury in the burglary trial of Douglas Fowley, a gangster. Two of Fowley's henchmen send Gildersleeve an anonymous note, offering him one thousand dollars if Fowley is acquitted. Gildersleeve receives the note on the morning of the trial and, in the excitement to get to court, leaves it in and old suit without reading it. When the jury retires to reach a decision, all vote for conviction except Gildersleeve, who believed that Fowley was innocent. His stubbornness results in a deadlock, and Fowley gains his freedom. Believing that Gildersleeve had accepted his proposition, Fowley steals one thousand dollars from the safe of Judge Charles Arnt, and sends it to him. Gildersleeve, however, believes that it is a donation sent by a wealthy woman for the local USO club, of which he was chairman. Meanwhile his suit had been

sent to the cleaners, and the contents of the letter is publicized. The townspeople suspect that he had accepted a bribe, and believe that he had been implicated in the robbery of the Judge's safe. Gildersleeve evades the police and attempts to clear himself, but he succeeds only in casting further suspicion on himself. After a series of hectic escapades, he finally traps the gangsters and saves his good name.

Jack Townley wrote the screen play, Herman Schlom produced it, and Gordon Douglas directed it. The cast includes Jane Darwell, Nancy Gates Frank Jenks, Grant Withers, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Ox-Bow Incident" with Henry Fonda and Dana Andrews

(20th Century-Fox, no release date set, time, 75 min.)

A depressing, unpleasant, at times horrible, melodrama. The story, which revolves around the lynching of three innocent men because of circumstantial evidence, brings out the basest traits in man. Whoever is responsible for selecting such sordid material for the screen should be awarded a "booby" prize. From the very start the action is made up of ugly situations. Other than the victims, there isn't a character for whom one feels sympathy. Even the hero is a weakling, uncontrollable when he is drunk. It is definitely not a picture for adolescents, and many adults will find it much too grim. The action takes place in 1885:—

Henry Fonda and Henry Morgan, cowboys, ride into a quiet cattle town in search of excitement, only to find things dull. Suddenly, Billy Benedict, a young cowboy, rides madly into town with the news that "Kinkaid," a close friend of Marc Lawrence, a cattleman, had been shot through the head. Angry, Lawrence organizes a lynching party. Harry Davenport, the town storekeeper, pleads with the men to let law and order take its course, but he is ignored. In the absence of the town sheriff, a deputy sheriff illegally swears in the posse as deputies. Headed by Frank Conroy, a ruthless Civil War major, the posse sets out to find the killers. Fonda and Morgan go along, as does Davenport. Before dawn they sight a campfire, around which are huddled three sleeping men—Dana Andrews, a cattleman; Anthony Quinn, a Mexican; and Francis Ford, a feeble-minded old man. The three are roused and accused of the murder, but they deny knowledge of the killing. Questioned by Conroy, Andrews reveals that he had bought cattle from "Kinkaid" on the previous day, but admits that he did not have a bill of sale. A few members of the posse, among them Fonda, Morgan, and Davenport, believe his story. Conroy, however, favors an immediate lynching, and calls for a vote. Those in favor win. After being permitted to write a farewell note to his wife and two children, Andrews and his two friends are hung. On their way back to town, the posse meets the sheriff, who informs them that "Kinkaid" is alive, and that Andrews and his men were innocent. Fonda and Morgan ride off to take care of Andrews' wife and children.

Lamar Trotti wrote the screen play and produced it. William A. Wellman directed it.

Unsuitable for those with weak stomachs.

"Five Graves to Cairo" with Franchot Tone, Eric von Stroheim and Anne Baxter

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 95 min.)

A good war melodrama. The good direction and the excellent performances of the cast, coupled with the interesting story, holds one's attention from beginning to the very end. Eric von Stroheim, as Field Marshal Rommel is fine; he makes the part seem real. The story has an intriguing spy background and, although there is a minimum of battle action, the pace is swift, exciting, and suspenseful. The closing scenes where Anne Baxter, in order to save Tone, admits to a crime she did not commit, will hold the audience in tense suspense. There is a sprinkling of comedy to relieve the tension. The exploitable title should help at the box-office:—

Exhausted from sunstroke, British Corporal Franchot Tone staggers into a hotel in an abandoned desert village just before Field Marshal Eric von Stroheim of the German Afrika Korps establishes the hotel as his headquarters. Aided by Akim Tamiroff, the hotel owner, Tone disguises himself as a former club-footed waiter, a Nazi agent, who had been killed during a bombardment. Anne Baxter, a French chambermaid, is hostile towards Tone; her brother had been captured at Dunkerque, and she blamed the British. She does not, however, reveal his identity. Von Stroheim unwittingly takes Tone into his confidence, and constantly refers to the "five graves," assuming that Tone understood what he was talking about. Though mystified, Tone does not show it. Meanwhile Anne becomes friendly

with Lieut. Peter Van Eyck, who promises to use his influence to gain her brother's release from a German prison camp. Tone eventually learns that von Stroheim had visited Africa before the war, disguised as an archaeologist, and had stored munitions in five secret caches. Von Stroheim arranges for Tone to be taken through the British lines to Cairo, to prepare for his triumphant entry. But before Tone departs, Van Eyck discovers the body of the man Tone was impersonating. Tone kills him before he can take action, and hides the body in Anne's bedroom. It is found just as Tone prepares to leave. Realizing the importance of Tone's mission, Anne makes it appear as if she had killed Van Eyck while resisting his advances. Tone reaches Cairo, where he turns over his information to the authorities. In a counter-offensive, the British drive von Stroheim out of the village. Tone rushes into the hotel to greet Anne, only to learn from Tamiroff that she had been executed.

Charles Brackett and Billy Wilder wrote the screen play, Mr. Brackett produced it, and Mr. Wilder directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Mr. Lucky" with Cary Grant and Laraine Day

(RKO, May 28; time, 100 min.)

Very good! It should go over strong with all types of audiences; the story is novel, and it has the ingredients for mass appeal—comedy, drama and romance. Cary Grant's performance is fine. His portrayal of an unscrupulous but likeable gambler, who assumes the identity of a dying Greek sailor to evade the draft, lends itself to many amusing complications. Although the action is of the breezy sort, several of the situations are quite dramatic, particularly the one where a Greek priest translates for Grant a letter from the sailor's mother, in which she informs her son of the misfortunes that had befallen the family with the Nazi invasion of Greece. The letter brings about Grant's reformation. Laraine Day is appealing as the wealthy socialite with whom Grant falls in love:—

Cary Grant's plan to raise funds with which to take his gambling ship to South America is disrupted when he and Paul Stewart, his partner, receive their draft notices. Both men see a chance to evade service when a member of the ship's crew, a Greek, who had a 4F classification, dies. They gamble for the 4F card and the ship. Grant wins. Unaware that the dead man had a long criminal record, Grant assumes his identity. He meets Laraine Day, socialite and officer of a war relief organization and, after some difficulty, persuades her to let him manage a gambling concession at the organization's charity ball. Not knowing that Grant intended to abscond with the profits, Laraine falls in love with him, much to the consternation of Henry Stephenson, her grandfather. Stephenson investigates Grant, and learns of the criminal record. He sets the police on Grant's trail. Laraine, however, quickwittedly rescues Grant, and compels her grandfather to call off the police lest she marry him. On the eve of the ball, Grant receives a letter addressed to the dead man, and learns that his brothers had been slain during the Nazi invasion of Greece. Shaken, Grant resolves to turn over the gambling profits to Laraine's organization. But Stewart, who had been rejected by his draft board, has other plans. At gun-point, he compels Grant to withhold most of the profits. Helpless, he has to stand by as Laraine accuses him of crookedness. Later, Grant is wounded in a fight with Stewart, but manages to recover the money. He sends it to Laraine. Convinced that he had not meant to cheat her, and learning of his real identity, Laraine frantically searches for him. She learns that he is sailing on his own ship with medical supplies for Greece. The boat sails before she reaches Grant. Although the vessel is sunk on its return voyage, Grant is rescued. He returns to find Laraine still waiting for him.

Milton Holmes and Adrian Scott wrote the screen play, David Hempstead produced it, and H. C. Potter directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Swing Shift Maisie" with Ann Sothorn, James Craig and Jean Rogers

(MGM, no release date set; time, 86 min.)

This is on about the same entertainment level as the previous "Maisie" pictures; it should satisfy as part of a double bill wherever the series is liked. This time Ann Sothorn, in her usual role of wise-cracking, good-natured "Maisie," finds adventure and romance while working on the "swing shift" at an airplane factory. The story is not very substantial, and one guesses how it will progress, but the action is fast and the dialogue is snappy:—

Angry because his employer had blocked his enlistment

by declaring him essential to the war effort, James Craig, a test pilot, goes to a night-club. There, he accidentally drops a steak during a dog act, causing the dogs to scramble for it. The patrons become panic-stricken and, as a result, the police ban the act. John Qualen owner of the dogs, and Ann Sothorn, his assistant, find themselves unemployed. To make up for his blunder, Craig promises to help them obtain jobs at the airplane factory. Qualen is accepted, but Ann has difficulty when she is unable to furnish a birth certificate. She is accepted, however, when Qualen signs a false affidavit to the effect that he had known her for many years. Ann rents a room at Connie Gilchrist's boarding house, where she saves the life of Jean Rogers, a beauty contest winner, who attempts suicide because of hard luck. She takes Jean in as her roommate, and helps her to obtain employment at the plant. The romance between Ann and Craig is nipped in the bud when he meets Jean. Ann stands by as he showers his attentions on her. When Craig finally gets his army commission, Ann promises that she will watch over Jean while he is gone. Jean, however, proves unfaithful during Craig's absence, and Ann refuses to have anything to do with her. When Ann learns that Craig had received a furlough, and that he was coming back to marry Jean, she determines to open his eyes. Aware of Ann's intentions, Jean informs the plant manager about Qualen's false affidavit, and makes it seem as if she is a saboteur. The FBI holds Ann for investigation. In a desperate effort to halt the wedding, Ann admits that she is a saboteur and implicates Jean and Craig. The police apprehend the couple. When Craig learns the story, he drops Jean and renews his romance with Ann.

Mary C. McCall, Jr., and Robert Half wrote the screen play, George Haight produced it, and Norman Z. McLeod directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Du Barry Was a Lady" with Red Skelton, Gene Kelly and Lucille Ball

(MGM, no release date set; time, 100 min.)

This comedy with music and romance is a good entertainment for the masses. Adapted from the Broadway stage play of the same title, the picture follows the play's general outline, but is without the ribald humor that gave the play its appeal. It has been photographed in Technicolor, and the settings and costumes are extremely lavish. The story itself is completely nonsensical, but it has many hilarious situations, and is suited to the talents of Red Skelton. The best part of the film deals with Skelton's dreaming that he is King Louis XV, and the Lucille Ball is Madame Du Barry. A good deal of the comedy is slapstick. The picture marks the debut of Zero Mostel, popular night-club and radio comedian, who, among other things, does an amusing burlesque of Charles Boyer. For added marquee strength, there is Tommy Dorsey and his orchestra:—

Lucille Ball, a night-club entertainer, wins the fervent but futile devotion of Gene Kelly, a fellow entertainer, and Red Skelton, the checkroom boy. Though she loves Kelly, Lucille admits frankly that she wants to marry a wealthy man. Skelton wins a sweepstakes prize and announces that he will turn over his winnings to Lucille, his "future" wife. When Kelly protests to her, Lucille shows her resentment by agreeing to marry Skelton. Delighted, Skelton gives a big party at the night-club. To forestall a scene, he mixes a "knockout" drink for Kelly, but inadvertently drinks it himself. Knocked unconscious, Skelton dreams that he is Louis XV of France, and that Lucille is Madame Du Barry, his mistress. While Skelton vainly pursues Lucille, certain members of his court plot against him. In this, they are aided by Kelly, who, as the Black Arrow, resented the heavy taxes with which Skelton's subjects were burdened. Skelton, by a chain of circumstances, joins a mob marching to the palace to hang him. But he turns the tables and has Kelly apprehended and sentenced to the guillotine. Du Barry, by promising to do whatever Skelton wishes, exacts his promise to halt the execution. Douglas Dumbrille, Skelton's Prime Minister, interferes. In a furious duel, Skelton kills Dumbrille, and rushes to the courtyard to stop the execution. As his shouts die out, Skelton wakes up, and finds himself being soothed by Virginia O'Brien, a cigarette girl, who had loved him before his sudden wealth. Remembering that in the dream Lucille had pleaded for Kelly's life, Skelton brings them together, and announces his own engagement to Virginia.

Irving Beecher wrote the screen play, Arthur Freed produced it, and Roy del Ruth directed it. The cast includes George Givot, Louise Beavers, "Rags" Ragland, and others. Morally suitable for all.

"The Leopard Man" with Dennis O'Keefe and Margo

(RKO, June 25; time, 66 min.)

A good program horror melodrama. It should prove satisfying to those who enjoy this type of entertainment, for the story is interesting and it holds one in tense suspense. Because of the expert handling and direction of the story, which, though weird, is entirely logical, the spectator is held in a state of uncertainty, not knowing whether an escaped leopard or a human being had committed the murders. The settings are eerie, and some of the situations are extremely spine-chilling. The love interest is pleasant, but incidental:—

Dennis O'Keefe, press agent for Jean Brooks, entertainer in a smart night-club in a New Mexican resort town, arranges for Jean to make a sensational entrance holding a black leopard on a leash. Disturbed because Jean's entrance had drawn the patrons' attention away from her, Margo, a Spanish dancer, frightens the animal by rattling her castanets. The leopard pulls itself free and escapes into the streets. While the police search for it, the frightened animal kills Margaret Landry, a young girl. On the following day, Tula Parma, daughter of a wealthy family, is found murdered in a cemetery, where she had gone to meet her sweetheart. The claw marks on her body indicate that the leopard had killed her. O'Keefe, however, suspects otherwise when Abner Biberman, owner of the escaped animal, tells him that it is not a leopard's nature to kill except for food. O'Keefe consults with James Bell, curator at the local museum, on the theory that the killer might be a man. Bell expresses his doubts. Within a few days, Margo is found murdered, her body clawed to pieces. O'Keefe and Jean both feel a heavy responsibility for the succession of murders that had followed the leopard's escape. When Biberman finds the leopard's body in a canyon, and states that it had been dead for over a week, O'Keefe recalls that Bell had searched that canyon earlier in the week. He tells the police of his suspicions, but they refuse to act on such flimsy evidence. O'Keefe determines to trap Bell by arranging with Jean to be alone with him. Bell attempts to murder her, but O'Keefe comes to her rescue. Bell confesses that he had murdered Margo and Tula, because an insatiable blood lust overcame him after seeing the body of Margaret.

Ardel Wray wrote the screen play, Val Lewton produced it, and Jacques Tourneur directed it.

Too horrifying for children.

"Dr. Gillespie's Criminal Case" with Lionel Barrymore

(MGM, no release date set; time, 88 min.)

This latest of the "Dr. Gillespie" pictures is below par for the series. Moreover, there are several situations in it that make it an unpleasant entertainment. That part of the picture that deals with the rehabilitation of a legless soldier, though handled intelligently, is not the sort of thing that will give present-day audiences pleasure; it serves to remind them that their loved ones face a similar fate. The situations that show children suffering from a deadly disease are too heart-rendering to be classed as entertainment. The story itself lacks continuity; it jumps from one episode to another, each episode having little relation to the other. There is some human interest and suspense, and the good-natured rivalry between Barrymore's assistants is mildly amusing. There is excitement in the situations where a demented prisoner kidnaps Barrymore and a prison board in a daring jailbreak:—

Donna Reed visits Dr. Lionel Barrymore to seek assurance that she was rid of the love she once had for John Craven, a convicted murderer. She wanted this assurance before marrying Sergeant Michael Duane. After giving her his blessing, Barrymore, accompanied by Dr. Van Johnson, his assistant, visits the prison where Craven is confined, and

arranges to speak to the prison board at their next meeting to express his belief that Craven was insane and a menace to the other prisoners, in spite of the fact that a jury had pronounced him sane. Meanwhile Dr. Keye Luke, Barrymore's Chinese assistant, busies himself rehabilitating William Lundigan, a wounded soldier. On his return to the hospital, Barrymore and his two assistants battle an epidemic that had broken out in the children's ward and, after a day and night struggle, succeed in conquering the disease. When the prison board meets, Barrymore and Johnson go to the penitentiary. Meanwhile Craven learns of Donna's intended marriage, and goes berserk. With smuggled guns and two confederates, he kidnaps the doctors and the board, and stages a jailbreak. He entrenches himself in a mountain cabin with his hostages, and defies the police. By clever reasoning, Barrymore convinces Craven that he is really insane. Craven snatches the guns from his confederates, rushes out of the cabin, and is killed by the police. Rescued, Barrymore returns to the hospital where his staff tenders him a surprise birthday party. He is delighted when Lundigan walks in, perfectly at ease with his artificial legs.

Martin Berkeley, Harry Ruskin and Lawrence P. Bachmann wrote the screen play, and Willis Goldbeck directed it. The cast includes Nat Pendleton Alma Kruger, Margaret O'Brien, Walter Kingsford, Henry O'Neill, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Follow the Band" with Eddie Quillan, Leon Errol and Mary Beth Hughes

(Universal, May 14; time, 60 min.)

A pleasant comedy with music; it should easily satisfy as a supporting feature in most situations. The story is thin, but it does have some amusing moments and serves to connect the many tuneless musical and specialty numbers. It offers more exploitable names than is to be found in similar pictures produced by Universal. Included among those doing specialty numbers are: Frances Langford, Leo Carrillo, Ray Eberle, Alvino Rey, the King Sisters, Hilo Hattie, the King's Men, and the Bombardiers—all are introduced as guest stars at a night-club. The songs, which are of the popular variety, include both old and current favorites:—

Eddie Quillan, hired hand on a farm owned by Samuel S. Hinds, devotes more time to playing the trombone than to milking the goats. When Quillan and Anne Rooney, Hinds' daughter, announce their engagement, Bob Mitchum, who hoped to marry Anne himself, persuades Hinds to send Quillan to New York to obtain for Hinds a membership in a Dairymen's Association; Hinds had been refused membership repeatedly, because he raised goats, not cattle. Russell Hicks, head of the Association, instructs his secretary to inform Quillan that he cannot see him for a week. Quillan rents a room at a boarding house, where Skinnay Ennis, a band-leader, overhears him playing the trombone and invites him to join his orchestra. Mary Beth Hughes, a singer, persuades Leon Errol, a cafe owner, to give the band a trial. Quillan is an immediate sensation, and becomes nationally publicized when he conquers a "zoot suit" gang, which tries to wreck the cafe. As a result of the publicity, Hinds brings Anne to New York to prove that "city life" had changed Quillan. To prevent Quillan from leaving the band, Mary makes it seem as if she was his girl friend, causing Anne to break the engagement. Hicks, having heard the band play at the cafe, offers Errol a contract to do a radio show sponsored by the Association. On the day of the broadcast, Quillan returns to the farm. The troupe follows him, arriving just as Anne is being married to Mitchum. Mary breaks up the ceremony, and reveals the conspiracy. Hicks grants Hinds a membership, and Quillan and Anne are reunited.

Warren Wilson and Dorothy Bennett wrote the screen play, Paul Malvern produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

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Allied Favors Divorcement and Dissolution

A forty-seven page report by Abram F. Myers, General Counsel for Allied States Association, embodying recommendations for changes in the Consent Decree, has been approved by Allied's board of directors at its meeting held in Detroit on May 5 and 6.

The Board adopted a resolution, which calls for the Attorney General to be informed that Allied "re-affirms its position that theatre divorcement and dissolution, fortified by proper injunctions, are the only permanent and effective cure for monopolistic conditions in the motion picture industry; that if the Attorney General should, nevertheless, decide to postpone seeking such remedies for an additional test period, then the Consent Decree should be amended in accordance with the recommendations set forth in the General Counsel's report."

The resolution also called for a copy of the report and the resolution to be sent to all exhibitor organizations not formally affiliated with Allied, in the hope that such action will "contribute towards unity of thought and action on this important subject."

Under the heading, "The story of an experiment in regulation by consent decree that came to naught" Myers, in his report, gives a thorough analysis of the events leading up to the Government's suit against the major companies; the views taken and the recommendations made by Allied while the Decree was being negotiated; and the inequities that exist in the Decree in its present form.

Pointing out that suggestions for amendments to the Decree should be germane to the document to be amended, Myers sets forth, in a brief review of his report, a list of recommendations that the Board may make to the Attorney General. They are as follows:

"1. *Acquisition of theatres.* The decree should prohibit absolutely the acquisition or construction by the defendants of additional theatres; or at the very least, should follow the precedent set by Judge Davies in the *Consent Case* and prohibit further acquisitions or constructions 'except after an affirmative showing that such acquisition (or construction) will not unreasonably restrain competition.'

"2. *Franchises.* Sec. XV providing that the decree shall not apply to franchises signed prior to June 6, 1940 should be eliminated, at least so far as franchises with affiliated theatres are concerned. Judge Davies' decision also is a precedent for this.

"3. *Licensing own theatres.* Sec. XVII providing that nothing in the decree shall impair the right of each defendant to license pictures to its own theatres on any terms it pleases, should be dropped. It is ridiculous that a decree respecting this right should have been entered in a case that was brought primarily to divorce the defendants from their theatres.

"4. *Block-booking and blind-selling.* Secs. III and IV (a) should be amended so as to permit the licensing of more than five features in a group with adequate safeguards against a return of the abuses of blind-selling and unrestricted block-booking by providing in respect of the pictures above the number that can be trade-shown either (a)

proper identification with a right of selection or (b) an adequate cancellation privilege.

"5. *Blind-pricing.* There should be included a provision requiring that allocations be made in the license agreement or otherwise when the pictures are licensed.

"6. *Pictures generally offensive.* Sec. VII should be amended so that an exhibitor shall have the right to cancel a picture on the ground that it is generally offensive on moral, religious or racial grounds subject to the right of the distributor to dispute the claim in an arbitration proceeding.

"7. *Conditioning the licensing of one group of pictures upon the licensing of another.* This lapsed provision of Sec. IV (a) should be restored.

"8. *Clearance.* Sec. VIII should be strengthened by adding provisions to the effect that clearance should not be based on one-way competition; that the gas and rubber situation be added to the factors to be taken into consideration in deciding whether any clearance is justified and in clearing maximum clearance, and that a provision be inserted that clearances be measured from the close of the run in the first theatre in case of move-overs.

"9. *Withholding prints.*" Under this heading, Myers refers to Section IX and points out that, previous to the signing of the decree, Allied had informed the Department of Justice that this section "does not begin to touch the real evil of the print situation." The real evil consisted in the "withholding of prints from a subsequent-run exhibitor, presumably at the behest of a prior run, in order to grant the latter greater clearance than is specified in the contracts." Myers recommends that this provision be amended in accordance with the following substitute previously proposed by Allied: "In booking prints for exhibition by exhibitors in a given exchange territory, the distributor should not withhold delivery of prints available in the exchange from one exhibitor in order to give another exhibitor a prior playing date or clearance not provided for in its exhibition contract. The concluding paragraph of this section relating to arbitration, should be retained."

"10. *Circuit Discrimination.*" Under this heading, Myers refers to Sec. X (recovery of a particular run) and contends that this "technical statute . . . marks the total surrender by the Department of Justice of the most important feature of its proceeding." He recommends that the entire provision be re-written, because of its hampering restrictions and the inadequacy of the remedy afforded by it. Myers recommends that the provision should "provide, in substance, that a claim by an independent exhibitor to the effect that a distributor has refused to license its feature pictures to a theatre operated by him on a particular run, and has licensed its features to a competing theatre operated by a circuit merely because the theatre so favored is a circuit theatre, shall be subject to arbitration." The provision as it now is written contains limitations and conditions that have deprived deserving exhibitors of a remedy.

"11. *Cost of Arbitration.* The rules of arbitration should be amended so that costs can be assessed against the complainants only in cases patently lacking in merit." Myers asserts that the present cost of arbitration is so high, that in many cases it acts as a deterrent to the filing of a justified complaint.

"Junior Army" with Freddie Bartholomew and Billy Halop

(Columbia, Nov. 26, 1942; time, 69 min.)

Satisfactory program fare. Although the story is thin and the situations trite, this melodrama has an inspiring quality, and is edifying entertainment for young persons. Human interest is awakened by the friendship between Freddie Bartholomew, a rich English youth, and Billy Halop, a young hobo, who is "adopted" by Freddie's wealthy uncle. Most of the action takes place in a military academy, where Freddie seeks to awaken in Billy a spirit of thoughtfulness and loyalty to his country, qualities that Billy had always believed to be false sentiment. For comedy there are the usual situations in which the upper classmen haze the plebes. Members of the "Dead End Kids" are included in the cast. There is no romantic interest:—

Freddie Bartholomew, a young English refugee, living on the ranch of Joseph Crehan, his uncle, encounters a gang of young hoodlums, and saves the life of Billy Halop, who had been in a fight with Huntz Hall, leader of the gang. In appreciation, Halop prevents the gang from stealing Freddie's horse. When the state police apprehends the gang for vagrancy, Billy manages to escape and takes refuge at the ranch. Crehan believes that he can make a good citizen out of Billy, and persuades him to enter a military academy with Freddie. Billy incurs the enmity of his classmates, because of his refusal to abide by the rules. Freddie, however, remains his staunch friend. Eager to be admitted to the aviation branch of the school, Billy, because of his weakness in English, steals the mid-term examination questions. Freddie catches him in the act, and reports the incident. Unable to understand that Freddie had carried out his duty, Billy leaves the school and returns to his old gang. He finds them in the company of Robert O. Davis, a Nazi saboteur. Learning that there was a plane at the school, the gang forces Billy to lead them to it, so that Davis could flee the country. Billy finds Freddie guarding the plane, and gives him warning. Together, they battle against the gang, which is overpowered when Freddie's classmates come to the rescue. As a reward for his loyalty, Billy is reinstated as a cadet.

Paul Gangelin wrote the screen play, Colbert Clark produced it, and Lew Landers directed it. The cast includes Bobby Jordan and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Ghost and the Guest" with James Dunn and Florence Rice

(Producers Releasing Corp., April 19; time, 59 min.)

Just a mildly entertaining program comedy-melodrama. The action revolves around a newly married couple, who find their honeymoon disrupted when gangsters invade the privacy of their farmhouse in search of a hidden diamond necklace. The film is a hodge-podge of nonsensical situations, and for laughs it depends on such devices as sliding panels, secret doors, hidden passages, an empty coffin, and the like. A frightened colored chauffeur and an eccentric old man add to the confusion. But it is mostly children who will enjoy these doings:—

James Dunn and Florence Rice, newlyweds, decide to spend their honeymoon in a country home that had been given to them by Florence's father. Accompanied by Sam McDaniel, their colored chauffeur, they arrive at their destination and find a dilapidated farmhouse with Robert Dudley, a former hangman, in possession. Dudley claims that the house had been given to him by "Honey Boy," a gangster, just before the criminal died on the gallows. He invites the couple to be his guests. As the newlyweds examine the house, an expressman delivers a coffin containing "Honey Boy's" body. Dunn telephones the sheriff and asks him to remove the body. When the sheriff arrives and examines the

coffin, it is found to be empty. In the midst of this confusion, Robert Bice, a gangster, and members of his gang, arrive at the house and pose as "Honey Boy's" relatives. Bice seeks a diamond necklace, which "Honey Boy" had hidden somewhere in the house. The sheriff orders every one to remain in the house. Meanwhile word comes that Tony Ward, a convict, had escaped from prison in the coffin after having removed "Honey Boy's" body. Dunn discovers a number of secret passages in the house, and, after a series of exciting chases, he helps the sheriff to capture Ward. Bice and his gang are also exposed. Florence finds the necklace hidden in an old statue. As the newlyweds settle down for the night, a real estate agent arrives and informs them that the house does belong to Dudley, and that their house was across the road, where they could have spent a quiet honeymoon.

Morey Amsterdam wrote the screen play, Arthur Alexander and Alfred Stern produced it, and William Nigh directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Stage Door Canteen" with an all-star cast

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 131 min.)

Excellent entertainment! No matter what walk of life your patron comes from, there is something in this picture for him. It has so many stellar artists that, on the strength of their names alone, it should prove to be one of the outstanding box-office pictures of the season. A smooth blend of music, dancing, romance, and comedy, it holds one's attention undiminished throughout its more than two hours running time. Practically all the action takes place in the Canteen, and the spectator is treated to an inside view of the wonderful work being done by the people in show business, in behalf of lonesome servicemen who seek a few hours of entertainment.

Although most of the footage is given over to the specialty numbers of the numerous stars and six of the country's most famous orchestras, the film is by no means a glorified vaudeville show; its most outstanding feature is a deeply moving and appealing triple love story concerning Cheryl Walker, Marjorie Riordan, and Margaret Early, as three of the Canteen's junior hostesses, and William Tracy, Lon McCallister, and Michael Harrison, as three soldiers awaiting their embarkation orders. One is made to feel their joys and sorrows, and is deeply touched by their separation. All six are newcomers to the screen, and they give a fine account of themselves.

Much credit is due Sol Lesser, the producer, and Frank Borzage, the director, for their excellent handling of this mass of talent, and their sympathetic understanding of the Stage Door Canteen's functions. The film is a worthy tribute to the American Theatre Wing, a great organization.

Every exhibitor should put his best showmanship behind this picture; his patrons will not be disappointed.

Delmar Daves wrote the screen play. The cast includes Judith Anderson, Kenny Baker, Tallulah Bankhead, Ralph Bellamy, Edgar Bergen, Ray Bolger, Ina Claire, Katharine Cornell, Jane Cowl, Gracie Fields, Lynn Fontanne, Virginia Grey, Helen Hayes, Katharine Hepburn, Hugh Herbert, Jean Hersholt, Allen Jenkins, George Jessel, Otto Kruger, Gertrude Lawrence, Gypsy Rose Lee, Alfred Lunt, Aline MacMahon, Elsa Maxwell, Harpo Marx, Yehudi Menuhin, Ethel Merman, Ralph Morgan, Allan Mowbray, Paul Muni, Merle Oberon, George Raft, Lanny Ross, Martha Scott, Cornelia Otis Skinner, Ned Sparks, Ethel Waters, Johnny Weissmuller, Arlene Whelan, Ed Wynn, Virginia Field, Vinson Freedley, Sam Jaffe, Helen Menken, Selena Royle, Bill Stern, Dame Mae Whitty, Elliott Nugent, Bert Lytell, and others. Also the orchestras of Count Basie, Benny Goodman, Kay Kyser, Freddy Martin, Xavier Cugat, and Guy Lombardo.

"Sarong Girl" with Ann Corio and Damian O'Flynn

(Monogram, May 28; time, 62 min.)

A program comedy-drama with music that is fairly entertaining. The action revolves around a burlesque queen, who seeks to avenge herself against a meddlesome reformer by marrying his son. It is rather a thin story, and there is little about the treatment that is original. Ann Corio gives a fair performance, but she is cast in an unsympathetic role. There is a fair amount of comedy injected by Tim and Irene Ryan, of radio fame. Irene's rendition of a sad ballad is one of the film's bright spots. The music by Johnny "Scat" Davis and his orchestra is of the popular "jive" variety, and should find favor with the younger set:—

Acting on a complaint by Henry Kolker, millionaire reformer, the vice squad arrest a burlesque troupe headed by Ann Corio. Damian O'Flynn, the show's lawyer, secures Ann's release by having her put on probation and placed in the custody of her mother. Learning that Ann is an orphan, O'Flynn employs Mary Gordon, inmate of an old ladies' home, to pose as her mother. Ann determines to even matters with Kolker. She secures employment at a night-club, and arranges with O'Flynn to invite Bill Henry, Kolker's son, to the opening. She becomes friendly with Henry, and he eventually falls madly in love with her. Meanwhile Ann and O'Flynn fall in love with each other, but neither admits it. When Henry informs his father of his intention to marry Ann, Kolker becomes furious. He offers Ann a fortune to forget his son, but she scornfully refuses to accept it. Henry and Ann set a wedding date. Miss Gordon, realizing that Ann loved O'Flynn and not Henry, goes to the vice squad and confesses that she is not Ann's mother. The police arrive in time to stop the ceremony, and take Ann to court. O'Flynn defends her, and presents papers showing that Ann is willing to be adopted by Miss Gordon. The Judge agrees to the adoption and dismisses the case. But he charges O'Flynn with fraud for having presented Miss Gordon as Ann's mother. When the Judge slyly suggests that a wife cannot testify against her husband, Ann and O'Flynn agree to marry.

Arthur Hoerl and Charles R. Marion wrote the screen play, Philip N. Krasne produced it, and Arthur Driefus directed it. The cast includes Manton Moreland, Betty Blythe, Gwen Kenyon, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Desperadoes" with Randolph Scott, Glenn Ford and Claire Trevor

(Columbia, March 25; time, 85 min.)

Those who seek virile melodrama should find this glorified western a good entertainment. Beautiful outdoor scenery, enhanced by Technicolor, forms the background, there is fast action, and the spectator is thrilled in some situations, and held in fairly tense suspense in others. The story itself is patterned along the lines of most westerns, and presents little that is novel, but the colorful characterizations, the excitement, and the many comical situations, lift it far above the average for this type of picture. Highlights of the film are a stampede by a herd of wild horses, and two violent bar-room brawls. The romantic interest is pleasant:—

Glenn Ford, an outlaw, rides into Red Valley to meet Edgar Buchanan, a stable owner, and Porter Hall, the local banker. Ford, who had been asked to stage a fake robbery on the bank, learns that Hall had not waited for him, but had hired Bernard Nedell to do the job. Hall had pocketed the money, and had offered to pay the townspeople fifty cents on the dollar. Ford becomes interested in Evelyn Keyes, Buchanan's daughter. Despite the protests of Claire Trevor, a childhood sweetheart, who operated a gambling hall, Ford decides to remain in town. Sheriff Randolph

Scott, an old friend of Ford's, urges him to leave. The bank hold-up, which had resulted in the death of several men, rouses the townspeople, and they demand of Scott that he locate the criminals. Scott, ignorant of Buchanan's part in the robbery, confides in him that he suspects Nedell. Seeing in Ford's presence an opportunity to place the blame, Hall arranges with Nedell to accuse Ford of the crime. After a bitter fight with Nedell, Ford decides to leave. But before leaving, Guinn Williams, his pal, holds up the bank. Scott apprehends them and holds them for trial. They are convicted of the killings and sentenced to hang. Knowing that they were innocent of murder, Scott helps them to escape, but is himself jailed. Ford returns to town that night, forces a confession from Nedell, and informs Evelyn that he will return to free Scott. Nedell's henchmen prepare to greet him with gunfire. By causing a herd of horses to stampede through the town, Ford clears every one off the streets and, in the confusion, releases Scott. In an ensuing gun fight, he kills Nedell. Buchanan kills Hall in an exchange of shots, and confesses his part in the affair. Through prison bars, he watches the marriage ceremony of Evelyn and Ford.

Robert Carson wrote the screen play, Harry Joe Brown produced it, and Charles Vidor directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Bombardier" with Pat O'Brien and Randolph Scott

(RKO, no release date set; time, 99 min.)

A fairly good war melodrama. Most of the footage is devoted to a dramatization of the methods employed to train bombardiers, and many spectators will find this part of the film extremely interesting, although some of the sequences are a little long drawn out. Other than that part dealing with the intricacies of high-level bombing, the story offers little that is new, but it is told in such a way that it arouses human interest and holds one's attention. The closing situations, in which Randolph Scott sets fire to a Tokio war plant, after being captured by the Japanese, so that the flames will guide a bombing squadron led by Pat O'Brien, give the film its most exciting, as well as implausible, moments. There is some comedy and romance:—

Foreseeing the vital role the Norden bombsight would play in time of war, Major Pat O'Brien persuades the army to adopt the instrument and to establish a training school for bombardier students. O'Brien is assigned to command the school. Captain Randolph Scott, O'Brien's friendly rival, scoffs at his faith in the instrument, but pilots one of the instruction planes. Among the first students at the school are Eddie Albert, brother of Anne Shirley, O'Brien's secretary, and Walter Reed, Albert's pal. Scott, who was in love with Anne, finds Reed replacing him in her affections. Under O'Brien's guidance, the students become proficient bombardiers. One day Scott accidentally loses control of his plane, causing the death of Albert. Grief-stricken, Anne goes away before Scott can explain. Soon after the Japs bomb Pearl Harbor, O'Brien is promoted to a Colonelcy. He takes a squadron of Flying Fortresses to a secret Pacific base, where he prepares for a night bombing raid on Tokio's war factories. On the night of the raid, Scott is sent on ahead to drop incendiary bombs to illuminate the target for O'Brien's squadron. He is shot down before he can complete his mission, and lands on the grounds of a Japanese aircraft factory. Tormented by his captors, Scott steadfastly refuses to reveal any information. Scott daringly escapes from his guards, and manages to set fire to the plant. The flames guide O'Brien's bombardiers, who successfully demolish their objective. Scott heroically dies in the raid.

John Twist wrote the screen play, Robert Fellows produced it, and Richard Wallace directed it. The cast includes Robert Ryan, Barton MacLane, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Mantrap" with Henry Stephenson and Lloyd Corrigan

(Republic, April 13; time, 58 min.)

A fair program murder mystery melodrama with a good sprinkling of comedy. Although the plot is developed by dialogue rather than by action, its amusing quality holds one's interest all the way through. Henry Stephenson, as an elderly, retired, expert on criminology, and Lloyd Corrigan, as his friend and physician, are pleasant characters. The spectator is kept guessing as to the murderer's identity, which is not divulged until the end. There is some romance, but it is incidental:—

Henry Stephenson and Lloyd Corrigan, his friend, witness an automobile accident in which Tom Stevenson is injured severely, and Stevenson's uncle is burned beyond recognition. After an investigation of the accident, District Attorney Edmund MacDonald concludes that Stevenson had murdered his uncle, and has attempted to make it appear as if the death had been caused by the auto crash. As a gesture of tribute to Stephenson on his seventieth birthday, Detective Joseph Allen, Jr., suggests to MacDonald that he invite the criminologist to solve the murder. Stephenson accepts gladly, and immediately disagrees with MacDonald's solution of the crime. Disregarding Stephenson's theories MacDonald orders Stevenson's arrest. But Stevenson escapes from the hospital, and makes his way to the criminologist's home, where he is given refuge. After a discussion with the injured man, Stephenson goes to the estate of Frederick Worlock, the dead man's twin brother, whose fortune would eventually be inherited by Stevenson. En route, Stephenson learns that Worlock, who had always been a friendly man, interested in his home, his servants, and in horticulture, had discharged his servants, and was preparing to sell his estate. Stephenson poses as an interested buyer, and arranges with Worlock to visit his home that evening to complete the sale. Stephenson summons MacDonald and Allen to his home, and promises to reveal the murderer. When Worlock arrives to conclude the sale, Stephenson, through a clever trick, proves that he is not Stevenson's wealthy uncle; Worlock, after killing his wealthy twin brother had placed his identification on the body so that it would be identified as his own. He then assumed the wealthy man's identity, and planned to convert the estate into cash.

Curt Siodmak wrote the screen play, and George Sherman produced and directed it. The cast includes Dorothy Lovett, Alice Fleming, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Girls in Chains" with Arline Judge and Roger Clark

(Producers Releasing Corp., May 17; time, 72 min.)

A run-of-the-mill gangster-prison melodrama; it may pass as a supporting feature in its intended market, but neither the story nor the background is particularly novel, and it lacks freshness in dialogue, as well as in action. There is a good share of human interest, and one is in sympathy with the heroine; her efforts to aid the mistreated inmates of a girls' reformatory eventually bring an end to the terroristic reign of a powerful gangster and a corrupt warden. It is not, however, a picture for discriminating audiences:—

Arline Judge, a high school teacher and psychiatrist, is asked to resign her position immediately after Allan Byron, her brother-in-law, a powerful gangster and political boss, is acquitted of murder by an intimidated jury; the school board felt that Arline may have a demoralizing influence on the students. With the aid of Detective Roger Clark, Arline secures a position as teacher in a girls' reformatory. Shocked

at the mistreatment given the girls, Arline treats them kindly and endeavors to rehabilitate them. But her policy is opposed by Clancy Cooper, the warden, and Dorothy Burgess, the head matron. Arline eventually learns that Cooper is under the influence of Byron, and that the affairs of the prison were run for their personal gain. With Clark's assistance, she proceeds to gather evidence to present to the Governor of the state. Meanwhile Robin Raymond, a discarded sweetheart of Byron's, is convicted of a crime and brought to the reformatory. Under Arline's kindly influence, she decides to change her ways. Seeking to charge Arline with neglect of duty so as to dismiss her, Cooper and Byron take Robin out of the reformatory secretly, and murder her. Arline is held responsible for her disappearance. The murder, however, had been witnessed by Emmett Lynn, a drunkard, who gives this information to Clark. Byron is killed trying to evade arrest, and Cooper is apprehended. The racket broken, Arline is appointed as head of the institution.

Albert Beich wrote the screen play, Peter Van Duinen produced it, and Edgar Ulmer directed it. The cast includes Barbara Pepper, Sidney Melton Patricia Knox, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Black Raven" with George Zucco and Wanda McKay

(Producers Releasing Corp., May 31; time, 60 min.)

A weak program murder mystery melodrama; it should find its best reception in small-town and neighborhood theatres, where patrons are not too fussy about story detail. The production values are very modest, practically all the action taking place in a roadside inn. The story is a hodge-podge of numerous characters, who all seemingly have a motive to commit the murders. It has all the trimmings of the usual murder mystery—a stormy night, darkened rooms, screams, and suspicious movements on the part of the different suspects. But this is not enough to hold one's interest, or to overcome the stilted direction and the poor performances:—

George Zucco, owner of an inn near the Canadian border, helps wanted criminals to escape into Canada. On a stormy night, he is visited by I. Stanford Jolley, an escaped convict, whom he had double-crossed in a shady deal. Jolley attempts to kill Zucco, but Glenn Strange, Zucco's handyman, overpowers and ties him to a chair. Before Zucco can deal with the convict, guests begin to arrive. They are Noel Madison, a racketeer, who was fleeing the country because Robert Middlemas, a corrupt politician, had set the police on his trail; Byron Foulger, a timid bank clerk, who had stolen fifty thousand dollars from his bank; Wanda McKay, Middlemas' daughter, and Bob Randall, who both planned to elope to Canada over her father's objections; and Middlemas, who had followed the young couple. During these arrivals, the convict unties himself and escapes. Middlemas has words with Randall, and strikes him. Meanwhile Madison, who had kept his presence in the inn a secret, plans to steal Foulger's ill-gotten money. Middlemas, too, has the same idea. Later Middlemas is found murdered. Charlie Middleton, the sheriff, accuses Randall of the murder, because of his argument with Middlemas. Soon after, the escaped convict returns to the inn and, mistaking Madison for Zucco, murders the racketeer. Randall is accused of the second murder. Zucco, however, clears up the mystery when he traps Foulger and compels him to confess to Middlemas' murder. The convict, still stalking Zucco, returns and wounds him mortally. Zucco returns the fire and kills the convict. As he dies, Zucco clears up Madison's death.

Fred Myton wrote the screen play, Sigmund Neufeld produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it.

Not for children.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXV

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No. 20

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RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES
Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

4006	Something to Shout About—Ameche-Blair	Feb. 25
4040	Let's Have Fun—Gordon-Lindsay	Mar. 4
4005	The Desperadoes—Scott-Ford	Mar. 25
4031	After Midnite with Boston Blackie—Morris	Mar. 18
4034	Murder in Times Square—Chapman-Lowe	Apr. 1
4029	She Has What It Takes—Falkenburg-Neal	Apr. 15
4212	Saddles and Sagebrush—Hayden	Apr. 22
	Redhead from Manhattan—Velez-Duane	May 6
	The More the Merrier—Arthur-McCrea	May 13
	The Boy from Stalingrad—Bobby Samarzich	May 20
	It's a Great Life—Singleton-Lake	May 27
	Law of the Northwest—Starrett	May 27
	Two Senoritas from Chicago—Falkenburg-Davis-Lowe	June 10
	Crime Doctor—Baxter-Lindsay	June 24
	Frontier Fury—Starrett	June 24
	Appointment in Berlin—Sanders-Chapman	June 29

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

327	Air Raid Wardens—Laurel-Hardy	April
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Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

264	Haunted Ranch—Range Busters (55 min.)	Feb. 19
201	Silver Skates—Kenny-Morison-Belita	Feb. 26
218	The Ape Man—Bela Lugosi	Mar. 19
265	Land of Hunted Men—Range Busters (58m.)	Mar. 26
252	Ghost Rider—Johnny Mack Brown (52 min.)	Apr. 2
256	Wild Horse Stampede—Gibson-Maynard (59 min.)	Apr. 16
204	Clancy Street Boys—East Side Kids	Apr. 23
202	I Escaped from the Gestapo—Brian-Jagger	May 14
	Sarong Girl—Corio-Davis	May 28
266	Cowboy Commandos—Range Busters	June 4
213	Wings Over the Pacific—Norris-Cooper	June 11
	The Stranger from Pecos—J. M. Brown	June 18

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 4219 Night Plane from Chungking—Preston-Drew. May 7
 4221 High Explosive—Morris-Parker May 14
 4222 China—Ladd-Young-Bendix May 28
 4223 Aerial Gunner—Morris-Arlen June 11
 4224 Five Graves to Cairo—Von Stroheim-Tone.. July 12
 4225 Salute for Three—Carey-Rhodes not set

Producers Releasing Corp. Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 314 The Ghost and the Guest—Dunn-Rice Apr. 19
 365 Lone Rider No. 3—Livingston (re.) May 7
 353 Texas Rangers No. 3—Newill-O'Brien (re.) . May 10
 360 Billy the Kid No. 4—Crabbe May 14
 305 Girls in Chains—Judge-Clark May 17
 321 The Black Raven—George Zucco May 31
 354 Texas Rangers No. 4—Newill-O'Brien June 15
 366 Lone Rider No. 4—Livingston (re.) June 21
 361 Billy the Kid No. 5—Crabbe July 1
 367 Lone Rider No. 5—Livingston July 15

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 321 Flight for Freedom—MacMurray-Russell.)
 384 Sagebrush Law—Tim Holt
 322 Ladies' Day—Velez-Albert
 323 This Land Is Mine—Laughton-O'Hara.. May
 324 I Walked with a Zombie—Dee-Conway.. and
 325 The Falcon Strikes Back—Conway June
 326 Squadron Leader X—English cast..... no
 330 Mr. Lucky—Grant-Day national
 327 Gildersleeve's Bad Day—Harold Peary .. release
 328 The Leopard Man—O'Keefe-Margo dates
 385 Avenging Rider—Tim Holt
 386 Red River Robin Hood—Tim Holt

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 254 King of the Cowboys—Roy Rogers (67m.).. Apr. 9
 217 The Mantrap—Stephenson-Allen, Jr. Apr. 13
 2303 Gaucho Serenade—Autry (reissue) (69m.) Apr. 15
 265 Santa Fe Scouts—Steele-Tyler (55m.) Apr. 16
 218 Shantytown—Archer-Lee Apr. 20
 217 Chatterbox—Brown-Canova Apr. 27
 2311 Calling Wild Bill Elliott—Elliott-Hayes
 (re.) (55 min.) Apr. 30
 220 Gentle Ganster—Barton MacLane May 10
 276 Days of Old Cheyenne—Don Barry (re.)
 (55 min.) May 15
 221 Swing Your Partner—Scotty-Lulubelle (re.) May 20
 266 Riders of the Rio Grande—Steele-Tyler (re.)
 (55 min.) May 21
 False Faces—Ridges-Williams (re.) May 28

Thumbs Up—Fraser-Joyce May 28

- 2304 Ride, Tenderfoot, Ride—Autry (reissue)
 (66 min.) June 1
 Prodigal's Mother—Paige-Graven (re.) June 4
 2312 Man from Thunder River—Elliott-Hay. (r.) June 11
 Song of Texas—Roy Rogers June 18

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 335 The Moon Is Down—Hardwicke Apr. 9
 341 Desert Victory—Documentary Apr. 16
 338 My Friend Flicka—MacDowall-Foster Apr. 23
 337 Tonight We Raid Calais—Annabella-Sutton. Apr. 30
 339 They Came to Blow Up America—
 Sanders-Sten May 7
 340 Crash Dive—Power-Baxter May 14

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- Border Patrol—Hopalong (67 min.) Apr. 2
 Taxi, Mister—Hal Roach Apr. 16
 Lady of Burlesque—Stanwyck-O'Shea (re.) Apr. 30
 Buckskin Frontier—Dix-Wyatt May 14
 Prairie Chickens—Hal Roach May 21
 Leather Burners—Hopalong (58 min.) May 28
 Stage Door Canteen—All star May
 Somewhere in France—English cast (re.) June 11
 Colt Comrades—Hopalong June 18

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 7004 White Savage—Montez-Hall-Sabu Apr. 23
 7018 Sherlock Holmes in Washington—Rathbone. Apr. 30
 Next of Kin—English cast May 7
 7044 Good Morning, Judge—Allbritton-O'Keefe.. May 7
 7033 Follow the Band—Quillan-Errol May 14
 7036 Cowboy in Manhattan—Langford-Paige May 21
 7064 We've Never Been Licked—
 Gwynne-Quine (re.) May 28
 7076 Raiders of San Joaquin—J. M. Brown 60m.. June 4
 7014 Captive Wild Woman—Carradine-
 Acquanetta June 4
 7043 All By Myself—Knowles-Ankers June 11
 Mr. Big—O'Connor-Jean June 18
 Corvettes in Action—Knowles-Foran (re.) .. June 25

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 217 Air Force—Garfield-Carey Mar. 20
 219 Edge of Darkness—Flynn-Sheridan Apr. 24
 220 Mission to Moscow—Huston May 22

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**Columbia—One Reel**

4858 Screen Snapshots No. 8 (9½m.)Mar. 31
 4707 Willoughby's Magic Hat—Phantasies (7m.)..Apr. 30
 4508 Plenty Below Zero—Col. Rhap. (7½m.) ..May 14
 4659 Community Sings No. 9 (10½m.)May 14
 4859 Screen Snapshots No. 9 (10m.)May 21
 4807 Aqua Thrills—SportMay 28
 4708 Duty and the Beast—Phantasies (6m.)May 28
 4904 Merchant Seamen—PanoramicsMay 28
 4509 He Can't Make It Stick—Col. Rhap.June 21
 4709 Mass Mouse Meeting—PhantasiesJune 25
 4860 Screen Snapshots No. 10June 25
 4660 Community Sings No. 10June 25
 4510 Tree for Two—Col. Rhap.July 16

Columbia—Two Reels

4405 Spook Louder—Stooges (re.) (16m.)Apr. 2
 4432 Blonde and Groom—All Star (15m.)Apr. 16
 4433 I Spied for You—All Star (18m.)Apr. 30
 4412 His Girl's Worst Friend—All Star (18m.) ..May 14
 4406 Back from the Front—Stooges (18m.)May 28
 4434 My Wife's an Angel—All Star (17½m.) ..June 11
 4435 Boobs in the Night—All Star (17½m.)June 25
 4407 Three Little Twirps—Stooges (15½m.)July 9
 4436 Here Comes Mr. Zerk—All StarJuly 23

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

S-465 Fala—Pete Smith (8m.)Apr. 10
 S-464 Wild Horses—Pete Smith (re.) (10m.)....Apr. 17
 C-494 Calling All Kids—Our Gang (11m.)Apr. 24
 W-445 The Boy and the Wolf—Cartoon (8m.) ..Apr. 24
 M-435 Inca Gold—Min. (11m.)Apr. 24
 T-418 Romantic Nevada—Travel. (9m.)Apr. 24
 K-482 Who's Superstitious—Pass. Par. (10m.)...May 1
 W-446 Red Hot Riding Hood—Cartoon (7m.) ..May 8
 M-436 Wood Goes to War—Min. (10m.)May 8
 S-466 Sky Science—Pete Smith (9m.)May 22
 T-419 Motoring in Mexico—Travel. (9m.)May 22
 W-447 The Lonesome Mouse—Cartoon (8m.)May 22
 M-437 Here At Home—Min. (10m.)May 22

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

A-306 Plan for Destruction—Special (1941-92)
 (20 min.)Apr. 22
 A-402 Heavenly Music—Special (22m.)May 1

Paramount—One Reel

Y2-2 At the Bird Farm—Speaking of Animals
 (re.) (9 min.)Mar. 19
 T2-4 The Aldrich Family Gets Into Scrap—
 Victory Short (re.) (10 min.)Mar. 25
 W2-3 Jungle Drums—Superman (10m.)Mar. 26
 J2-4 Popular Science No. 4 (10m.)Apr. 2
 R2-6 Beach Command—Sportlight (re.) (9m.) ..Apr. 9

A2-6 Moments of Charm—Headliner (reissue) ...Apr. 16
 E2-7 A Jolly Good Furlough—Popeye (6m.)Apr. 23
 L2-4 Unusual Occupations No. 4 (10m.)Apr. 30
 U2-4 The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins—
 Mad. Mod. (8 min.)Apr. 30
 Y2-3 Speaking of Animals in Current Events—
 Speaking of Animals (9 min.)May 7
 A2-7 Letter from Ireland—Headliner (10m.)May 14
 R2-7 Tumble Bugs—Sportlight (9m.)May 14
 W2-4 Superman in the Underground World—
 Superman (8 min.)May 21
 E2-8 Ration for the Duration—Popeye (6m.)May 28
 J2-5 Popular Science No. 5 (10m.)June 11
 A2-9 Revival of Moments of Charm—Head. 10m..June 18
 U2-5 Jasper's Music Lesson—Mad. Mod. (7m.)..June 18
 E2-9 Cartoons Ain't Human—Popeye (6m.)June 25

RKO—One Reel

34308 Aqua Aces—Sportscope (8m.)Mar. 26
 34104 Private Pluto—Disney (7m.)Apr. 2
 34309 Gulf Limited—Sportscope (8m.)Apr. 23
 34105 Fall Out-Fall In—Disney (7m.)Apr. 23

RKO—Two Reels

33105 Air Crew—This Is America (18m.)Mar. 12
 33705 Gem-Jams—Leon Errol (18m.)Mar. 19
 33405 Indian Signs—Edgar Kennedy (17m.)Mar. 26
 33106 Medicine on Guard—This Is Amer. (20m.)..Apr. 9

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

3901 Monkey Doodle Dandies—Lew Lehr
 (9 min.) (re.)Dec. 11
 3558 Barnyard WAAC—Terry-Toon (7m.) (re.)..Dec. 18
 3302 When Winter Calls—Sports (9m. (re.) ...Dec. 25
 3567 Somewhere in the Pacific—T.T. (9m.) (re.)..Jan. 8
 3156 Strange Empire—Magic Carpet (8m.) (re.)..Jan. 15
 3559 Scrap for Victory—T.T. (7m. (re.)Jan. 22
 3568 He Dood It Again—T.T. (7m.) (re.)Feb. 5
 3303 Steel-head Fighters—Sports (9m.) (re.) ...Feb. 12
 3155 Gay Rio—Magic Carpet (9m. (re.)Feb. 19
 3560 Barnyard Blackout—Terry-Toon (7m.)Mar. 5
 3304 Back to Bikes—Sports (9m.) (re.)Mar. 12
 3561 Shipyard Symphony—Terry-Toon (9m.)Mar. 19
 3157 Land Where Time Stood Still—
 Magic Carpet (9 min.) (re.)Apr. 2
 3562 Patriotic Pooches—Terry-Toon (7m.)Apr. 9
 3202 Climbing the Peaks—H. James (9m.) (re.)..Apr. 16
 3402 Accent on Courage—World Today (9m.) ..Apr. 30
 3851 Weapons for Victory—America Speaks 7m..May 7
 3569 The Last Round-up—Terry-Toon (7m.)May 14
 3401 Navy W.A.V.E.S.—World Today (10m.)..June 4
 3571 Pandora's Box—Terry-Toon (7m.)June 11
 3570 Mopping Up—Terry-Toon (7m.)June 25

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

- Vol. 9 No. 8 America's Food Crisis—
March of Time (20 min.)Mar. 26
- Vol. 9 No. 9 Inside Fascist Spain—
March of Time (20 min.)Apr. 26
- Vol. 9 No. 10 Show Business at War—
March of Time (20 min.)May 21

Universal—One Reel

- 7359 Mr. Chimp Goes to Town—Var. Views 9m..Apr. 12
- 7379 Shepherd of the Roundhouse—Per. Odd. 9m..Apr. 19
- 7245 Swing Your Partner—Lantz Cartune (7m.)..Apr. 26
- 7380 Tom Thumb in Person—Per. Odd. (9m.)...May 24
- 0997 What We Are Fighting For—Vict. Feat.
(10 min.)May 24
- 7246 The Dizzy Acrobat—Lantz CartuneMay 31
- 7360 Mirror of Sub-Marine Life—Var. Views 9m..May 31

Universal—Two Reels

- 8685 A Flaming Target—Don W. No. 5 (20m.)..May 4
- 8686 Ramming the Submarine—Don W. No. 6
(18 min.)May 11
- 8687 Bombed in the Ocean Depths—Don W. No. 7
(19 min.)May 18
- 8688 Blackout Treachery—Don W. No. 8 (18m.)..May 25
- 7129 Dancing on the Stars—Musical (15m.)May 26
- 8689 The Torpedo Strikes—Don W. No. 9 (17m.)..June 1
- 8690 Blasted from the Skies—Don W. No. 10
(20 min.)June 8
- 8691 A Fight to the Death—Don W. No. 11
(16 min.)June 15

Vitaphone—One Reel

- 8507 U. S. Army Band—Mer. Mel. (7m.)Apr. 17
- 8607 Wise Quacking Duck—Looney Tune
(7 min.) (re.)May 1
- 8409 With Rod & Reel on Anticosti Island—
Sports (10 min.)May 1
- 8608 Tokio Jokio—Looney Tune (7m.) (re.) ...May 15
- 8714 Greetings Bait—Mer. Mel. (7m.) (re.)May 15
- 8410 Rover's Rangers—Sports (10m.)May 22
- 8508 All American Band—Mel. Mas. (10m.)May 22
- 8715 Jack Rabbit & the Beanstalk—Mer. Mel.
(7 min.) (re.)June 5
- 8716 The Aristo Cat—Mer. Mel. (7m.) (re.) ...June 12
- 8609 Yankee Doodle Daffy—L. Tune (7m.) (re.)..June 19
- 8411 Gray, White & Blue—Sports (10m.)June 19
- 8509 Childhood Days—Mel. Mas. (10m.)June 26
- 8718 Wacki-Ki Wabbitt—Mer. Mel. (7m.)June 26
- 8717 Tin Pan Alley Cats—Mer. Mel. (7m.)June 29

Vitaphone—Two Reels

- 8004 Eagles of the Navy—Special (20m.)Apr. 24
- 8111 Three Cheers for the Girls—B'way Brev.
(20 min.) (re.)May 8
- 8006 Champions Training Champions—Special
(20 min.)May 29

**NEWSWEEKLY
NEW YORK
RELEASE DATES****Pathe News**

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- 35179 Sat. (O.) May 29
- 35280 Wed. (E.) June 2
- 35181 Sat. (O.) June 5
- 35282 Wed. (E.) June 9
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Metrotone News

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No. 21

Again About "The Stars and Stripes"

Among those who have joined Motion Picture Herald and Motion Picture Daily in condemning *The Stars and Stripes*, the overseas army newspaper that editorially chastised Hollywood for its lack of "good taste" in films designed for foreign consumption, is the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors of America.

According to weekly *Variety*, the MPPDA is attempting to learn the motive behind *The Stars and Stripes'* accusation that "flag waving in pictures is sickening," and also to find out what specific pictures it had in mind.

"Attitude of the MPPDA," states *Variety*, "is understood to be that the American film business wants to be criticized, if such criticism is constructive. But to simply announce "you're terrible" without basis of fact does nobody any good, is reportedly the Haysites' idea on the subject." *Variety* points out that *The Stars and Stripes'* blast is understood to have particularly riled the MPPDA, and that industryites are beginning to wonder if somebody has a pet peeve against the American picture business in London, "or if the anti-picture business squawks are being used simply as a means of attracting attention."

It seems as if the MPPDA is making much of the fact that *The Stars and Stripes* did not specifically mention the pictures it had in mind when it stated that Hollywood's excessive use of cinematic flag-waving is "sickening," and that it embarrassed an American soldier to "see yourself portrayed on the screen as a 'bloody hero' when you know you're surrounded by men, women and children who have proved that they are brave beyond the ability of Hollywood to portray."

Since the MPPDA maintains that *The Stars and Stripes'* criticisms were not based on facts, we assume that it prefers to believe that "sickening flag-waving" pictures are non-existent, and that some frustrated person or persons have utilized this Army newspaper to satisfy a pet peeve against the industry.

It is not very pleasant to think that the editorial staff of an army newspaper is so naive as to allow an outsider to influence its opinions, or that some one on the staff itself is taking advantage of an opportunity to get something off his chest, or that the staff merely picked on the industry to garner some free publicity for itself. But there you have it; it is the best we can make out of the MPPDA's thoughts on the matter.

It may be that the MPPDA does not understand the term "flag-waving" in the sense that it was used by *The Stars and Stripes*. A deft explanation ap-

peared in a recent editorial in *The Independent*, which stated: "*The Stars and Stripes* used the term 'flag-waving' more or less as a figure of speech. What the service man objects to is the manner in which THEY are presented on the screen, a superman hero capable of unheard of feats of valor, far far superior to any and all other soldiers, a sort of comic strip man in khaki with a charmed life and uncanny ability." In other words, "Hollywood heroics."

For the benefit of the MPPDA, here are two samples of that which embarrasses the American soldier in foreign countries and, as a matter of fact, in this country:

In RKO's "Bombardier," Pat O'Brien, planning a bombing raid on a Japanese city, dispatches Randolph Scott to drop incendiary bombs on the target so that the flames will guide the bomber planes. Scott reaches his objective, but before he can complete his assignment, his plane is shot down and he lands on the grounds of a heavily guarded aircraft plant, where Japanese soldiers capture him immediately. Tortured and beaten to the point of exhaustion, Scott refuses to reveal any information. Realizing that O'Brien's bomber squadron was due over the target within a few moments, Scott, quick as a flash, overpowers his guards, steals a gasoline-laden truck, sets it on fire, and furiously drives it about the grounds, setting fire to everything he comes in contact with. Those who try to stop him with machine gun bullets and hand grenades are simply run down. Scott, with his bare hands, does such a thorough job of devastation, the bombing of the plant by O'Brien's squadron seems superfluous. No matter how many soldiers shoot at Scott, he comes through without a scratch. He loses his life only when the bombs rain down.

In 20th Century-Fox's "Crash Dive," Tyrone Power and Dana Andrews locate a secret German supply base by following, underwater, with their submarine, a Nazi supply ship, thus gaining entrance into the heavily mined harbor. After lying on the bottom of the harbor until nightfall, the submarine surfaces, and a party of about ten men, led by Power, go ashore. In the course of about fifteen minutes, the huge Nazi base is completely demolished. Meanwhile the submarine sinks every ship in the harbor. Hundreds of Nazi soldiers attack the small group of invaders, but Power and two of his men hold them at bay while the rest of the party returns to the submarine safely. In a final dash, Power and one of his two men manage to reach the submarine by swimming through a sea of flaming

(Continued on last page)

**"The More the Merrier" with Jean Arthur,
Joel McCrea and Charles Coburn**
(Columbia, May 13; time, 104 min.)

Excellent mass entertainment! George Stevens' masterful direction, and the fine acting of Jean Arthur, Joel McCrea and Charles Coburn, make this one of the brightest and gayest comedies to have come out of Hollywood in many a season. The picture has a touch of individuality that sets it apart from films of a similar nature; it should do very good business. Dealing with the shortage of living accommodations in over-crowded Washington, D. C., the story revolves around a pretty government employee who finds herself in romantic difficulties when an elderly industrialist, to whom she had sublet half of her small apartment, shares his sleeping quarters with a personable young aircraft technician, and then tries to promote a romance between the two. One's interest in the proceedings never lags; the action is fast-moving, the dialogue good, and many of the situations arouse hearty laughter. There is one love sequence between Miss Arthur and McCrea that is unusually good; it is both comical and dramatic. The story has human interest, and the leading characters are sympathetic:

Because of the housing shortage in Washington, Jean Arthur patriotically decides to sublet half of her apartment. Charles Coburn, an elderly industrialist, persuades Jean to accept him as a tenant, although she preferred to rent to a woman. Sensing that Jean was a lonely girl, despite her vague engagement to Richard Gaines, a government official, Coburn, without her knowledge, sublets half his quarters to Joel McCrea, an aviation expert, in the hope that a new romance will bud. Jean is outraged at finding McCrea in the apartment, but she agrees to let him stay on temporarily. Coburn takes McCrea to a night club where they meet Jean and Gaines. He takes Gaines away for a discussion of the housing shortage, and arranges for McCrea to escort Jean home. Both fall madly in love before the evening is over. Soon after they retire to their respective rooms, Jean and McCrea are surprised by FBI agents; earlier that day McCrea had been seen looking out the window through binoculars, and he was suspected of espionage. Jean, too, is taken to headquarters. Summoned to identify them, Coburn deliberately brings Gaines with him. The young pair are cleared, but Gaines is shocked to learn that McCrea lived in Jean's apartment. Angry, Jean breaks her engagement to him, and refuses to have anything to do with McCrea. Coburn, however, persuades Jean and McCrea to marry to save one another's good name. After some more of Coburn's machinations, the young couple decide that their marriage is more than one of convenience.

Robert Russell, Frank Ross, Richard Flournoy and Lewis R. Foster wrote the screen play. George Stevens produced and directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

**"False Faces" with Stanley Ridges,
Bill Henry and Rex Williams**
(Republic, May 28; time, 56 min.)

A fairly interesting murder mystery melodrama of program grade. Since the identity of the murderer is not made known until the very end, the audience is held in suspense. Most of the action is centered around the solving of the murder, and it offers very

little excitement. Although several persons are suspected of the crime, the actual murderer is not one of the suspects. Stanley Ridges, as the District Attorney, gives an outstanding performance. One feels sympathetic toward him, for his wayward son, though innocent, is the chief suspect. The romantic interest is incidental:—

Insanely jealous of Veda Ann Borg, singer with Bill Henry's orchestra, Rex Williams, son of District Attorney Stanley Ridges, becomes involved in a fight when an annoying stranger accosts her. Henry joins in the fight, but the mysterious stranger escapes. Both are arrested for disturbing the peace, but are released when Williams identifies himself. Williams and Henry go to Veda's apartment, where she denies knowing the stranger. Henry leaves them quarreling and goes home, stopping to telephone Janet Shaw, Williams' sister, with whom he was secretly in love. Meanwhile the police inform Ridges of his son's scrape. The following morning Veda is discovered murdered, a deep gash in her palm. Among her effects are found old love letters from Henry, and other incriminating evidence. Questioned by Ridges, Henry readily admits having once been in love with Veda, but denies knowledge of the murder. He refuses to give any further information lest he incriminate Williams and drag in Janet. Believing that Henry is trying to shield his son, Ridges orders the police to bring Williams to him. Meanwhile Ridges learns from Janet of her love for Henry. Positive that his son is guilty, Ridges demands the truth from Williams. The boy confesses that he had quarreled with Veda, but denies the murder. Confused, Ridges asks Williams to accompany him to Veda's apartment. There, they find a small pile of dirt near a vacuum cleaner, and discover a scarf pin—the murder weapon. The pin is identified as belonging to Chester Clute the building manager, who confesses to the crime; Veda had trifled with his affections, and he had murdered her. Henry is released, and Williams' experience brings about his reformation and a reconciliation with his father.

George Sherman produced and directed it.
Adult entertainment.

"Jitterbugs" with Laurel and Hardy
(20th Century-Fox, June 11; time, 74 min.)

A fair program comedy with music; the Laurel and Hardy fans should find it amusing. This time the boys become involved with confidence men and racketeers in an effort to recover money stolen from a vivacious young lady. The story is completely silly, but one may enjoy it if it is not taken seriously. The comedy is of the slapstick variety, and it arouses hearty laughter in situations that would ordinarily seem ridiculous. The musical numbers are worked into the plot without retarding the action. The production values are modest:

Stranded on a desert road, out of gas, Laurel and Hardy, a two-man "jitterbug" orchestra, are rescued by Bob Bailey, a confidence man, who makes it appear as if his "Wonder Gas Pills" turn water into gasoline. He induces the boys to sell the "pills" as a carnival in Midvale. While Laurel and Hardy attract people with their music, Bailey meets Vivian Blaine, a local girl. Soon after the boys sell the "pills" their customers realize that they had been hoodwinked. Bailey, posing as a detective, rescues them from the mob, and speeds away. Realizing that Bailey had her

purse, Vivian jumps on the car. Later, she tells the three men that some strangers had swindled her mother out of ten thousand dollars in an "envelope switch." Bailey believes that he could locate the crooks at a New Orleans' racetrack, and suggests that they all go there. To fool the gang, Hardy poses as a wealthy Texas "Colonel," and Laurel poses as Vivian's rich aunt from Boston. After a series of hilarious incidents in which the crooks are at first completely fooled, before they discover the ruse, the boys succeed in recovering the money and jailing the gang.

Scott Darling wrote the screen play, Sol M. Wurtzel produced it, and Mal St. Clair directed it. The cast includes Douglas Fowley, Noel Madison, Lee Patrick, Robert Emmet Keane, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Coney Island" with Betty Grable, George Montgomery and Cesar Romero

(20th Century-Fox, June 18; time, 96 min.)

For audiences who seek relief from war films, and are not too fussy about story values, "Coney Island" should prove a satisfying entertainment; it has tuneful musical numbers, comedy, and romance. Lavishly produced, the Technicolor photography enhances its colorful background—Coney Island in the year 1905. The story, however, is trite, and its treatment is routine. Much of the footage is given over to Betty Grable's singing and dancing, with too much emphasis placed on her physical allure. As a matter of fact, some of her body contortions border on the vulgarity. The bright spots of the picture are those situations in which Charles Winniger, as a likeable drunkard, and Phil Silvers, as a side-show owner, appear. Both provoke many laughs. There is practically no human interest in the story, and the characters are not of the type to arouse sympathy; it depends entirely for its entertainment on the musical numbers and comedy situations:—

Learning that Cesar Romero, his former partner, operated a profitable saloon in Coney Island, George Montgomery, a gambler, visits him and demands that he be made a partner, claiming that Romero had once swindled him. Romero turns him down. Before leaving, Montgomery chides Betty Grable, Romero's girl and singer in the saloon's floor show, about her flashy clothes. With the aid of Phil Silvers, an old friend, Montgomery opens up a spectacular side-show, and employs Charles Winniger, an amiable drunkard, to lure Romero's customers away. Romero's henchmen wreck the show. In retaliation, Montgomery starts a riot in the saloon, during which Winniger is knocked unconscious by Romero. By hiding Winniger and staging a fake funeral, Montgomery compels Romero to make him a partner—his price for silence. Montgomery takes Betty in hand and compels her to change her singing style. She becomes a huge success, and eventually both fall in love. Learning that Montgomery planned to open his own saloon, with Betty as the attraction, Romero arranges with a famous theatrical producer to catch Betty's act. Montgomery at first attempts to spoil the plan, but he later helps Betty to obtain a contract. She becomes an immediate sensation, and agrees to wed Montgomery. On the day of the wedding, Romero makes it appear as if Montgomery was marrying her to further his own ambitions. Betty calls off the marriage. Months

later, when she refuses his marriage proposal, Romero confesses, and Betty and Montgomery become reconciled.

George Seaton wrote the screen play, William Perlberg produced it, and Walter Lang directed it.

Not for children.

"Action in the North Atlantic" with Humphrey Bogart and Raymond Massey

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 126 min.)

This war melodrama, which pays tribute to the men of the Merchant Marine and to the Navy gun crews that protect them on their hazardous journeys, may do better than average business on the strength of Humphrey Bogart's popularity, but it is no more than a fair entertainment, the sort that will appeal more to men than to women. The chief fault with the picture is its excessive length, which tends to tire one. The story, which revolves around a torpedoed tanker crew and their reactions to the dangers they face, is not very substantial, nor are any of the characters particularly outstanding. The most interesting sequences deal with the operational methods of convoys, and the perils encountered as they ply the submarine-infested North Atlantic sea lanes. The production values are very good; they add a realistic touch to the several thrilling sea battles, but it is not enough to overcome the slow-moving story. A brief courtship and marriage between Julie Bishop and Bogart furnishes a romantic interlude that has little bearing on the proceedings:—

When his tanker is torpedoed in the Caribbean, Capt. Raymond Massey orders Humphrey Bogart, his first mate, and members of the crew, to abandon ship. The submarine sinks the lifeboats, but Bogart and Massey, together with a few members of the crew, cling to a raft. After many days of hardship, they are rescued and brought to New York. Massey is given charge of a new Liberty ship, and his surviving crew members rejoin him. Learning that Bogart had last been seen with Julie Bishop, a cabaret singer, Massey forces his way into her apartment where he finds and urges Bogart to rejoin him. He becomes duly apologetic when Bogart reveals that he and Julie had just been married. Bogart, however, bids his bride goodbye. Together again, Massey and Bogart sail the ship to Halifax to join a convoy headed for Murmansk. Submarines attack the convoy in mid-Atlantic, and the ships disperse. Massey's ship is followed all day by a submarine, which keeps out of gun range. When darkness falls, Massey halts the ship's motors and drifts all night. By morning, the submarine is lost. Within a few hours the ship is attacked by Nazi planes, and Massey is wounded seriously. Bogart takes command and beats off the attack. Soon after, the submarine appears again. Through a clever ruse, Bogart makes it appear as if his ship was on fire, causing the submarine to surface. Bogart rams the submarine, sinking it. Listing heavily, the ship limps into Murmansk, its cargo intact.

John Howard Lawson wrote the screen play, Jerry Wald produced it, and Lloyd Bacon directed it. The cast includes Alan Hale, Ruth Gordon, Sam Levene, Peter Whitney, Minor Watson, Chick Chandler, Michael Ames, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

oil. Throughout this devastating raid and the counter-attack by the Nazis, only one of Power's men loses his life—and, oddly enough, his death is the result of heart failure, without which he, too, would have made good his escape. To top all this daring action, the submarine's periscope is shot off and, Andrews, acting as a human periscope, stands on deck and orders the ship to submerge to a point where half his body protrudes above sea level. In that fashion, he guides the submarine safely through the mine fields.

"Crash Dive" and "Bombardier" are but two examples of pictures that contain the type of action that makes an American serviceman in a foreign country squirm in his theatre seat. Other pictures, too numerous to mention, are equally guilty. Although this paper agrees that such Hollywood heroics are acceptable to a good many American picture-goers, the fact remains that oftentimes this type of action detracts from the sincerity of an otherwise good picture. It definitely does us no good in foreign countries.

HARRISON'S REPORTS believes that the criticisms of *The Stars and Stripes* are honest, sincere, and justified. Those in the industry who have disagreed with its criticisms have yet to come forth with a sensible argument against this army paper's views. Up to now the dissenters have done nothing more than to heap insults on *The Stars and Stripes'* editorial staff, and to infer that it has joined hands with some unknown persons in a sinister attempt to undermine the good work that the industry is doing.

The dissenters should quit their low tactics and concentrate on correcting the conditions *The Stars and Stripes'* editorial staff complains of. After all, there must be some justification to their complaint; most people agree with them.

TUNIS EXPEDITION

A fine reportorial work, and a good piece of propaganda favorable to the industry, is Colonel Darryl F. Zanuck's "Tunis Expedition," the book in which he gives a day-by-day account of his experiences in North Africa during his supervision of the U. S. Signal Corps' picture, "At the Front in North Africa."

Brief, clear, and exciting, the account tells of his preparations for the journey, and it imparts to the reader the emotional stress under which he labored as a result of the secrecy surrounding the movements of his party. From the time he leaves England to take part in the invasion of North Africa, until his departure with the completed film record of the invasion operations, Zanuck's adventure is a series of swift and exciting episodes, some of which he experienced under the most trying conditions of war and in the heat of battle. Before starting his trek across Africa into Tunisia, Zanuck was a witness at the meeting between the Allied General Staff and the late Admiral Darlan. His description of this conference makes absorbing reading.

The book is interspersed with many humorous touches and dramatic incidents. For example, the scarcity of cigars, without which he felt completely lost; his being assigned, soon after landing in Africa, to take over control of a radio station, and his experiences with the station's personnel; his moments of solitude when his thoughts reverted to his home, his wife, and his children—all this, and much more, make "Tunis Expedition" an illuminating account

of the early phases of the North African campaign, easy to read and well worth any one's time.

Darryl Zanuck's record as a soldier is one that he and the industry have a right to be proud of. In World War I, he enlisted at the age of fifteen and saw service overseas. Before we entered World War II, when our government took steps to build up our armed forces, Zanuck, at a great financial sacrifice, offered his services to the Army. He was instrumental in organizing the program in which training films were produced for the armed forces with all possible speed, and with a minimum of government red tape. Immediately after Pearl Harbor, Zanuck requested front line duty. He was sent on a mission to England as an observer for the Signal Corps, at which time he requested and was given permission to go along on a British Commando raid on the coast of France. His subsequent trips to the Aleutian Islands and to North Africa on photographic missions need no re-telling; most of you are aware of his exploits. As a member of General Eisenhower's staff during the invasion of North Africa, Zanuck, through his knowledge of the French language, rendered a service to the nation of inestimable value.

Notwithstanding that his record is above reproach, the Truman Committee, early last April, during the smear campaign it instituted against the motion picture industry, singled out Zanuck as the object of its ridicule. Much was said against him, but he was not given an opportunity to testify in his own behalf. Impartial Washington observers declared, at that time, that the committee's investigation was purely political, inspired by Zanuck's anti-isolationist activities before the war. The isolationist press made capital of the hearings.

The Truman Committee's attempt to humiliate Colonel Zanuck will go down as one of the most disgraceful acts committed by a Congressional body.

HARRISON'S REPORTS wishes Colonel Zanuck and his book great success, and hopes for his early return to civilian life and the motion picture business.

ABOUT MISLEADING ADVERTISING

A communication from Pete Wood, Secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, says in part:

"Our convention this week was a very constructive and successful one, and I am sorry that you were not here to observe the proceedings.

"I want to compliment you on your May 1st editorial 'Misleading Advertising.' Martin touched on this particular matter in one of the business sessions, and I fully agree with your editorial and the remarks made by Martin. (Ed. Note: Martin G. Smith, president of ITO).

"It is shameful that an industry that is doing so much to maintain the morale of our fighting boys and civilian population should stoop to acts of this nature. Undoubtedly, the almighty dollar is of more importance to some individuals than is the matter of business ethics and high principles."

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No. 22

HARRY WARNER ON WAR PICTURES

"When this war is over, Warner Brothers does not want to be known as the company that made the greatest musical picture during the war. We will leave that fairy tale version of this world we live in to the small group of entertainment appeasers which is presently at work in this industry or being pressured by groups on the outside." So says Harry M. Warner in a recent statement in which he branded as "isolationists" and "appeasers" those persons, in the industry, who contend that the public is fed up with the steady diet of war pictures they have been given. Mr. Warner describes these persons as "an isolationist group that is waging a propaganda campaign against war films which are doing a great service in the United Nations' cause."

Urging the exhibitors not to be "intimidated or coerced by people who are not wholeheartedly behind the war effort," Mr. Warner warns them that "any arbitrary exclusion of war films, either to satisfy a small appeaser element or for personal reasons without regards for the general public's interest is equivalent to sabotage."

Harry Warner is either badly informed, or he is suffering from a severe case of "jitters."

For months, the exhibitors, from the small independent to the large circuit operator, have been crying out that their patrons are complaining about too many war pictures. In a recent poll conducted by the *Motion Picture Herald*, it was found that "overwhelming exhibitor opinion holds that the theatre is vastly over-fed with war pictures and themes of stress and strife. The preponderant demand is for entertainment, and entertainment of the sort that puts aside the care of these war worn days, when every day fills the lives of millions with intense emotional stress."

A few of the more prominent men in the exhibition field who have decried the excessive number of war films now on the market, are Harry C. Arthur, Jr., E. V. Richards, E. J. Hudson, Elmer C. Rhoden, Bob O'Donnell, A. H. Blank, and M. A. Lightman—all have done and are doing fine work in behalf of the industry's war effort. To class them as "appeasers" or "isolationists" is laughable.

If Warner Brothers wishes to dedicate itself to the production of films that deal only with the war effort, in the belief that in following such a policy it can best serve the interests of the nation, no one can or will deny it that privilege. But it should not try to justify its stance by branding as "appeasers" and "isolationists" those who sincerely feel that they, too, will best serve the interests of the nation, if, through non-war films, they can help the harassed citizen and the men in the armed forces forget for a few hours the heartaches and worries that the condition of war impose. Such films as "Hello, Frisco, Hello," "For Me and My Gal," and "The Road to Morocco" may not teach us what we are fighting for, but they do succeed in giving a person much needed relaxation, thus strengthening his mind and body for the work that lies ahead. No one denies the necessity of war films that will, in terms of entertainment, clarify the issues of war, but there can be no question that an overdose of war-themed pictures—even good ones—soon tires the picture-goer. The same is true of musicals or any other cycle of pictures. A balanced diet of motion picture entertainment is necessary if we are to retain the interest of the millions of

people who attend our theatres weekly. And so long as we retain their interest, we will be sure that the vital messages contained in our government shorts and in our war-themed features will reach the greatest number of people.

As already mentioned, Harry Warner may be suffering from a severe case of "jitters." Of the limited number of pictures released by Warners in the past six months, as well as those slated for future release, practically all have to do with the war, and all are so-called big productions. The thought that a good many exhibitors will think twice before booking a war picture may be causing Mr. Warner some concern. His specific warning to the exhibitors about "arbitrary exclusion of war films . . . for personal reasons without regard for the general public's interest" smacks of his own personal interest to the exclusion of the general public's interest.

It is unfortunate that Harry Warner resorted to name-calling to prove his point; his statement was publicized widely by the daily papers, and many people who are not acquainted with industry problems may get a distorted opinion of what goes on in our business. When Harry Warner brands as unpatriotic the producer who produces a non-war film and the exhibitor who exhibits it, he is merely furnishing ammunition to those who enjoy sniping at the industry.

It is easy to throw mud under the guise of patriotism, but it often spatters him who throws it.

A SWEEPING VICTORY FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

The final decree in the Crescent Case, handed down by Judge Elmer D. Davies on May 17, in which he enjoined the Crescent Amusement Company and its affiliates from continuing the competitive practices for which it was put on trial and convicted under the Sherman anti-trust law, constitutes a major victory for the Department of Justice's anti-trust division, as well as for the independent exhibitors.

In finding Crescent and its affiliated companies guilty of building up a monopoly in the theatre business, the decree, among other things, enjoined and restrained the defendants from continuing in combination with each other and with the distributors for the purpose of maintaining their monopoly; declared invalid all existing film franchises entered into between the defendants and the distributors, except for their theatres in Nashville; ordered the divestment of interlocking ownership among the defendants; and prohibited the coercion of independent operators into either selling their theatres, or abandoning their plans to compete against the defendants.

The decree is an effective instrument, a great step toward the elimination of monopolistic practices on the part of major circuits and distributors that have plagued independent exhibitors for many years.

What bearing it will have on the Department of Justice's attitude in its suit against the major distributors, temporarily settled by the Consent Decree that expires this coming November, remains to be seen.

Because of the great interest many subscribers have shown in the Crescent Case, the complete text of the decree is printed on the back page of this issue.

"Mr. Big" with Donald O'Connor, Gloria Jean and Peggy Ryan

(Universal, June 18; time, 73 min.)

Highly entertaining program fare. It is a fast moving film, filled with musical numbers that will certainly please the younger element and satisfy their elders. Like most Universal comedies with music, this, too, offers little in the way of a story, but Donald O'Connor's ingratiating personality, and his excellent handling of the song, dance, and comedy routines, hold one consistently entertained. In this he is aided by Peggy Ryan, a "jitterbugging" young miss, whose antics provoke much laughter. Gloria Jean, in a subdued role, adds much to the entertainment values with her pleasing voice. Two songs by the Ben Carter choir, a group of colored youngsters, are highlights of the film. For added marquee value, there is Ray Eberle, popular radio crooner, who sings one song. The dancing numbers of the "Jivin' Jacks and Jills" are excellent:—

At the Davis School of the Theatre, directed by Samuel S. Hinds, where teen-age youngsters study drama and the serious arts, the students, including Donald O'Connor, Peggy Ryan, and Gloria Jean, want to become singers and dancers. But Florence Bates, Gloria's aunt, who owned the school, forbids them to indulge in modern music and dancing. Robert Paige and Elyse Knox, teachers at the school, sympathize with the youngsters, as does Hinds. When Donald reveals that he had written a musical comedy for the year's class play, Miss Bates rejects the idea and selects Sophocles' "Antigone" as the play. The youngsters start rehearsals on the classic play, but, as soon as Miss Bates leaves for a trip to New York, they persuade Hinds to allow them to stage Donald's musical. On the day of the show, Miss Bates returns and announces that some of her friends were coming up from the city to view the play. Donald, through a clever ruse, manages to get Miss Bates away from the auditorium. She misses most of the play, returning in time for the final "jitterbug" number, which infuriates her. But when some Broadway producers, who had been in the audience, rave about the show, she changes her attitude. The youngsters are signed for a Broadway musical.

Jack Pollexfen and Dorothy Bennett wrote the screen play, Ken Goldsmith produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"No Place for a Lady" with William Gargan and Margaret Lindsay

(Columbia, February 11; time, 66 min.)

A moderately entertaining program murder-mystery melodrama with comedy situations, parts of which are pretty silly. Since the comedy is stressed, it is difficult for the spectator to take the melodramatic angle seriously. Moreover, the outcome is obvious and, although the murderer is not identified until towards the end, it is simple for one to guess his identity long before then. The story is far-fetched, and is developed in an unbelievable way:—

Doris Lloyd, owner of a tire company, receives \$50,000 from Frank Thomas, hijacker and night-club operator, for permitting him to replace a truckload of new tires with old tires. The old tires are set on fire, and insurance money is later collected. Miss Lloyd and Jerome Cowan, a singer in Thomas' club, head for New York to elope. Meanwhile in San Francisco, William Gargan, a private detective, makes the front pages when he succeeds in saving Phyllis Brooks, an actress, from a murder charge. To escape the reporters, Gargan decides to take Phyllis to his shore cottage. He telephones Margaret Lindsay, his fiancée, to prepare the cottage. Sensing that Margaret is jealous, Dick Purcell, a reporter, persuades her to help him play a practical joke on Gargan. They take a wax model to the cottage, and disarrange the furniture to simulate a murder scene. When Gargan and Phyllis reach the cottage, they investigate and find the body

of Miss Lloyd in the basement. Gargan goes to Thomas' cafe nearby to telephone the police. Margaret and Purcell accompany the police to the cottage. Instead of Miss Lloyd's body, the police find the wax model. They refuse to believe his story, and ridicule him. Later, however, she admits to Gargan her part in the practical joke, and offers to help him solve the mystery. A dress label, noted by Gargan when he found the body, leads him to a fashionable woman's shop where he learns of Miss Lloyd's identity. At her tire concern, Gargan learns of the fire, of the insurance money, and of Miss Lloyd's plan to elope with Cowan. He trails Cowan to Thomas' night-club, but Cowan escapes during a blackout. After a series of incidents in which Cowan is murdered by Thomas, who makes it appear as if Gargan had committed both murders, Gargan succeeds in trapping Thomas and clearing his own reputation as a detective.

Eric Taylor wrote the screen play, Ralph Cohn produced it, and James Hogan directed it. The cast includes Edward Norris, Ralph Sanford, Tom Dugan, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Stormy Weather" with Bill Robinson and Lena Horne

(20th Century-Fox, no release date set; time, 77 min.)

This musical, with an all-colored cast, is a satisfying entertainment. The players, headed by Bill Robinson and Lena Horne, include some of the country's foremost Negro artists, and their popularity may be of considerable help at the box-office. The story, which deals with Robinson's career from the time he returned from France after World War I to the present day, is thin, but it serves to hold together the numerous musical sequences, to which most of the footage is devoted. Among those doing specialty numbers are Cab Calloway and his band; Katherine Dunham and her classical dancing troupe; Ada Brown; Miller and Lyles; "Fats" Waller; and the Nicholas Brothers, sensational dancers—all are very good. The songs are the favorite tunes of the past twenty-five years, and the dancing is a cavalcade of the popular steps covering the same period. It has a good share of comedy, but the romantic interest is mild:—

Returning from France after World War I, Bill Robinson and Dooley Wilson, his buddy, attend a welcome home party at a Harlem night-club. There, Robinson meets Lena Horne, a singer, sister of one of his dead buddies. Lena recognizes Robinson's talent as a dancer, and urges him to remain in New York, arguing that he would become an immediate sensation. But Robinson does not feel sure of himself, and he decides to go to Memphis where he had a job waiting for him on a river steamboat. One evening Robinson does an impromptu dance to the music of a band on the boat and, the leader, impressed, with his dancing, persuades him to obtain a job in a Beale Street cafe in Memphis. Months later, Lena, now a star, visits the cafe with Babe Wallace, her producer, and is delighted to find Robinson. Wallace reluctantly agrees to give him a part in the show. Jealous of Lena's attentions to Robinson, Wallace gives him a minor part in the show, and forbids Lena to keep any dates with him, informing her that it would be bad publicity if she were seen with a minor player. Angered by Wallace's tactics, Robinson deliberately goes onstage and does a specialty dance number. He is acclaimed by the audience, but Wallace discharges him. As the years roll by, Robinson becomes a huge success, and he asks Lena to marry him. She refuses to give up her career, and they part. Robinson goes to Hollywood where he adds to his fame. One day Cab Calloway visits him and asks him to come to a night club that evening to entertain soliders. There, for the first time in years, he meets Lena. Wild with happiness, Robinson gives the greatest performance of his career.

Frederick Jackson and Ted Koehler wrote the screen play, William LeBaron produced it, and Andrew Stone directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Bataan" with Robert Taylor and Thomas Mitchell

(MGM, no release date set; time, 113 min.)

A good war melodrama, with an all-male cast. The film drives home with realism the plight of the American soldiers who fought bravely against overwhelming odds at the time of the Japanese invasion of the Philippines. The story revolves around a patrol of thirteen soldiers and their courageous but futile last stand when they fight a delaying action on Bataan Peninsula to prevent the Japanese from rebuilding a demolished bridge, thus allowing American and Philippine soldiers additional time to withdraw to favorable positions. The action is grim and bloody, perhaps a bit too strong for women, as one by one the men meet death, with the last man standing in his own grave and fighting to the end. The bombing scenes and hand-to-hand skirmishes are extremely realistic and highly exciting. The performances are excellent, with that of Robert Walker's, a newcomer to the screen, outstanding. "Bataan" is one of the better war pictures:—

Pushed back by the Japanese toward Bataan, Sergeant Robert Taylor and Corporal Thomas Mitchell report to Capt. Lee Bowman for orders. Taylor is put in charge of a squadron of men, and is ordered to blow up a bridge crossing a deep ravine, after all evacuees had passed over. After blowing up the bridge, Taylor and his men select a grove as their center of operations, and prepare to prevent the Japanese from rebuilding the bridge. In addition to Taylor, Mitchell, and Bowman, the patrol included Lieut. George Murphy, whose damaged plane was in a field nearby; Corp. Lloyd Nolan, who is recognized by Taylor as the man who had cost him his commission years previously; Robert Walker, a sailor, who had become separated from his mates; Roque Esparitu, a Philippine soldier; and Corporals Barry Nelson, Phillip Terry, Kenneth Spencer, Alex Havier, Tom Dugan, and Desi Arnaz. As Bowman plans with Taylor for the siege, a Jap sniper kills him. Nelson is ordered to climb a tree and to act as a lookout, but he is immediately shot down and killed. The Japanese start rebuilding the bridge. As time passes the men become exhausted. Havier strays from the camp, and the following morning is found hanging from a tree. Esparitu is discovered, too, decapitated by a Japanese sword. Dugan loses his life as he shoots down a Japanese plane. Arnaz dies from malaria. Meanwhile Murphy had repaired his plane. As he attempts to take off, Japanese machine guns fire on him. Wounded, he orders Taylor to load his plane with dynamite. He manages to get the plane into the air, and dies when he deliberately crashes it into the bridge. The blast fails to completely wreck the structure and, Terry, with hand grenades, finishes the job, but dies on the spot. Japanese infantrymen attack and are beaten back, but Mitchell, Spencer, and Walker lose their lives. Nolan loses his life when one of the "dead" Japs stabs him. After burying Nolan, Taylor digs his own grave for a death he knows is inevitable.

Robert D. Andrews wrote the screen play, Irving Starr produced it, and Tay Garnett directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Spy Train" with Richard Travis and Catherine Craig

(Monogram, July 2; time, 61 min.)

A passable program spy melodrama, suitable mostly for small-town and neighborhood theatres. Although the story and situations are familiar, it holds one in fair suspense, because of the presence of a time bomb in a travelling bag on a train. The action, most of which takes place on the train, is at times slow-moving. But it has enough excitement to satisfy indiscriminating audiences. There is occasional comedy to relieve the tension, and a pleasant, though routine, romance:

On the way to visit his publisher to learn why his articles about Germany had been discontinued, Richard Travis, war correspondent, and Chick Chandler, his photographer, meet

Catherine Craig, the publisher's daughter, and Thelma White, her maid, at the railroad station. Meanwhile Paul McVey, Warren Hymer, and Evelyn Brent, Nazi agents, had checked a bag containing important papers at the station, but could not recover it because they were being watched. To destroy the papers, they check another bag containing a time bomb. Hymer recognizes Thelma, an old acquaintance, and hits upon a scheme. He arranges for her to pick up the bag, promising to meet her on the following night to collect it. By mistake he gives her the ticket for the time bomb. Evelyn and McVey board the same train, planning to steal the bag from Thelma. When Hymer's mistake is discovered, the head of the gang telegraphs McVey, but the wire is delayed. Meanwhile on the train, Travis recognizes McVey and Evelyn as spies, and notices that they are after something in Catherine's compartment. Many complications ensue, with Travis finally intercepting the telegram intended for McVey, and decoding it. With but a few minutes to spare before the explosion, Travis removes the bag from the train. The spies grasp the bag from him and, paying no heed to his warning, run off. The explosion kills them. Later Travis learns that the publisher had discontinued his articles under pressure of the Nazis; through fake photographs, they had led him to believe that Catherine was one of them. Catherine and Travis plan to marry.

Leslie Schwabacher, Wallace Sullivan, and Bert Lyton wrote the screen play, Max King produced it, and Harold Young directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Ghosts on the Loose" with the East Side Kids and Bela Lugosi

(Monogram, July 16; time, 64 min.)

An entertaining "East Side Kids" program melodrama; it should please wherever the series is liked. This time the "Kids" become involved with Nazi saboteurs who try to frighten them from their hideout by making it appear as if the house is haunted. The action is exciting in spots, and there is plentiful comedy. It ends on a high note of comedy, with one of the "Kids" contracting German measles from one of the spies; instead of the usual measles spots, his face is marked with many tiny swastikas. The romantic interest is of minor importance:—

As a gift for Ava Gardner, his bride, Rick Vallin buys a small cottage on the outskirts of town. Wheeler Oakman, a henchman of enemy agent Bela Lugosi, tries to buy the house from Vallin; the agents had a secret printing press and hideout with a connecting passageway from their house to Vallin's cottage. Contending that the cottage is haunted, Oakman persuades Vallin to spend his honeymoon elsewhere. The "East Side Kids" reason that the newlyweds did not go to the cottage because it needs redecorating. Immediately after the wedding they go out to the house to put it in shape, but mistake the house next door, where the agents resided, as Vallin's house. Lugosi and his gang try to scare them off by making them believe that the house is haunted. In the confusion, the "Kids" discover the printing press, together with enemy propaganda, and believe that Vallin is a traitor. They move the press to Vallin's house, so that he would not be discovered by the police. Meanwhile the former owner of Vallin's cottage notifies Vallin and the police that there are enemy agents in the house next to the cottage. Vallin and the police arrive at the cottage simultaneously. The police find the press in Vallin's home and suspect him. Just then one of the "Kids" discovers the secret passageway leading to the spies' hideout. A melee ensues, with Lugosi and his gang kidnapping Ava. The "Kids" manage to free Ava, Vallin satisfactorily explains the matter of the printing press to the police, and Lugosi and his gang are captured.

Kenneth Higgins wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman and Jack Dietz produced it, and William Beaudine directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

COMPLETE TEXT OF THE DECREE IN THE CRESCENT CASE

"This cause having come for hearing before this Court upon the pleading and upon the testimony, both oral and documentary, introduced at the trial of this cause, and the same having been argued by counsel both orally and upon briefs submitted, and the Court having made and filed its findings of the fact and conclusions of law herein on the 3rd day of March, 1943:

"It is hereby ordered, adjudged and decreed as follows:

(1) That the defendants, The Crescent Amusement Company, a corporation, Muscle Shoals Theatres, a partnership, Rockwood Amusements, Inc., Lyric Amusement Company, Inc., and Kentucky Amusement Company, Inc., be, and they hereby are, enjoined and restrained from continuing in combination with each other and with each of the distributors, Paramount, Fox and Warner, in making franchises with the purpose and effect of maintaining their theatre monopolies and preventing independent theatres from competing with them; and are further enjoined and restrained from entering into any similar combinations and conspiracies having similar purposes and objects.

"(2) That the defendants, the Crescent Amusement Company, Muscle Shoals Theatres, Rockwood Amusements, Inc., Anthony Sudekum, Kermit C. Stengel and Louis Rosenbaum, be, and they hereby are, enjoined and restrained from continuing in combination with each other for the purpose of dividing the territory in which the theatres may be operated by any of them pursuant to implied agreements among themselves; and are further enjoined and restrained from entering into any similar combinations and conspiracies having similar purposes and objects.

"(3) That the defendants, the Crescent Amusement Company, Muscle Shoals Theatres, Rockwood Amusements, Inc., Cumberland Amusement Company, a corporation, Cherokee Amusements, Inc., Anthony Sudekum, Kermit C. Stengel, and Louis Rosenbaum, be, and they are hereby enjoined and restrained from continuing in combination with each other for the purpose and with the effect of eliminating, suppressing and preventing independent competition in the territory in which each operates; and are further enjoined and restrained from entering into any similar combinations and conspiracies having similar purposes and objects.

"(4) That the defendants, the Crescent Amusement Company, Muscle Shoals Theatres, Rockwood Amusements, Inc., Anthony Sudekum, Kermit C. Stengel and Louis Rosenbaum, be, and they hereby are, enjoined and restrained from continuing in combination with each other, and with Paramount, Fox, Warner, Loew's, RKO, and United Artists in licensing films for the purpose and with the effect of maintaining their theatre monopolies and preventing independent theatres from competing with them; and are further enjoined and restrained from entering into any similar combinations and conspiracies having similar purposes and objects.

"(5) That the defendant, United Artists Corporation, be, and it hereby is, enjoined and restrained from continuing in combination with Cumberland, Rockwood, and Stengel to eliminate its independent theatre competition in Rogersville, Tennessee; and is further enjoined and restrained from entering into any similar combinations having similar purposes and objects.

"(6) That the defendant, United Artists, be, and it hereby is, enjoined and restrained from continuing in combination with Rosenbaum, Sudekum, Rockwood and Stengel to eliminate independent theatre competition of Muscle Shoals at Athens, Alabama; and is further enjoined and restrained from entering into any similar combinations having similar purposes and objects.

"(7) That each of the defendants, The Crescent Amusement Company, Muscle Shoals Theatres, Rockwood Amusements, Inc., Cumberland Amusement Company, and Cherokee Amusements, Inc., be, and it hereby is, enjoined and restrained from creating or maintaining an unreasonable monopoly of the business of operating theatres in the towns of Tennessee, Northern Alabama, and Central and Western Kentucky, in which each has theatres.

"(8) That each of the defendants, The Crescent Amusement Company, Muscle Shoals Theatres, Rockwood Amusements, Inc., Cumberland Amusement Company and Cherokee Amusements, Inc., be, and it hereby is, enjoined and restrained from combining its closed towns with its competitive situations, in licensing films for the purpose and with the effect of compelling the major distributors to license films on a non-competitive basis in competitive situations, and to discriminate against its independent competitors in licensing films.

"(9) That each of the defendants, the Crescent Amusement Company, Muscle Shoals Theatres, Rockwood Amuse-

ments, Inc., Cumberland Amusement Company, and Cherokee Amusements, Inc., its officers, agents or servants, be, and it hereby is, enjoined and restrained from coercing or attempting to coerce independent operators into selling out, or to abandon plans to compete with it by predatory practices.

"(10) That all existing franchises to which the Crescent Amusement Company, Muscle Shoals Theatres, Rockwood Amusements, Inc., Cumberland Amusement Company, Cherokee Amusements, Inc., Lyric Amusement Company, Inc., Kentucky Amusement Company, Inc., Anthony Sudekum, Kermit C. Stengel, or Louis Rosenbaum, hereinafter referred to as the exhibitor defendants, is a party, be and they hereby are, declared invalid, except insofar as any such franchise shall relate to theatres operated by any of said defendants in Nashville, Tennessee, and the validity of which the Court does not expressly adjudicate in this cause.

"(11) That all existing agreements not to compete in the future to which any exhibitor defendant is a party, be, and they hereby are, declared invalid.

"(12) That each exhibitor defendant be, and hereby is, enjoined and restrained from conditioning the licensing of films in any competitive situation outside of Nashville, Tennessee, upon the licensing of films in any other theatre situation.

"(13) That each of the corporate exhibitor defendants, be, and it hereby is, required to divest itself of the ownership of any stock or other interest in any other corporate defendant, or affiliated corporation, with the exception of Strand Enterprises, Inc., and each such defendant is hereby enjoined and restrained from acquiring the ownership of any stock or other interest in any other corporate defendant, or affiliated corporation, with the exception of Strand Enterprises, Inc.

"(14) That the defendant, Louis Rosenbaum, be, and he hereby is, required to divest himself of any interest which he may have in any of the corporate defendants, and said defendant Rosenbaum is hereby enjoined and restrained from acquiring interest in said corporate defendants.

"(15) That the defendant, Anthony Sudekum, be, and he hereby is, required to resign as an officer of any corporation except the Crescent Amusement Company, which is affiliated with any exhibitor defendant, and said defendant is enjoined and restrained from acquiring any control over any such affiliated corporation, except the Crescent Amusement Company, by acting as an officer thereof, or otherwise.

"(16) That the defendant Kermit C. Stengel, be, and he hereby is, required to resign as an officer of any corporation, except one defendant corporation of his choice, which is affiliated with any exhibitor defendant, and said defendant is enjoined and restrained from acquiring any control over any such affiliated corporation, except the corporation of his choice, by acting as an officer or otherwise.

"(17) Whenever reference is made in this decree to affiliated corporations such reference shall not include the following corporations: Bijou Louisiana Corporation, Shreveport Theatre Corporation, Bijou-Pensacola Corporation, Bijou-Ft. Worth Corporation, Ace Theatre Corporation, Lincoln Amusement Company, Lewisburg Theatre Company, The Auditorium Company, Hippodrome Attractions, Stock Yards, Ricks Hosiery Mills, Springfield Woolen Mills, Mid-State Chickasaw, Dickson, and Nu-Strand Corporation.

"(18) That the acts of dissolution described in paragraphs (13), (14), (15) and (16) hereof, shall be performed within one year from date of entry of this decree.

"(19) That the exhibitor defendants, and each of them, be, and they hereby are, enjoined and restrained from acquiring a financial interest in any additional theatres, outside Nashville, Tennessee, in any town where there is already a theatre, whether in operation or not, unless the owner of such theatre should voluntarily offer to sell same to either of the exhibitor defendants, and when none of said defendants, their officers, agents or servants are guilty of any of the acts or practices prohibited by paragraph nine (9) hereof.

"(20) That the jurisdiction of this cause is restrained for the purpose of enabling any of the parties to this decree to apply to the Court at any time for any further orders and decrees as may be necessary or appropriate for the construction or carrying out of this decree, for modification or termination of any of the provisions thereof, for the enforcement or compliance therewith and for the punishment of violations thereof.

"(21) That the cost of this action shall be taxed against the exhibitor defendants.

"(22) That the Bill of Complaint be, and it hereby is, dismissed as to the defendants, Strand Enterprises, Inc., Universal Pictures Company, Universal Film Exchanges, Inc., Columbia Pictures Corporation, and R. E. Baulch, upon the merits."

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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

Its Editorial Policy: No Problem Too Big for Its Editorial
Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 1943

No. 23

INTERESTING FRANCHISE DEALS

Allied States Association has sent to this office an interesting bulletin containing information about some of the franchise and film rental deals made with three major distributors by the Crescent Amusement Company and its affiliated corporations, which, in a recent decision handed down by Judge Elmer D. Davies, of the Federal District Court in Nashville, Tenn., were found guilty of violating the Sherman anti-trust law.

Judge Davies' final decree in this case, considered by many to be the most drastic ever entered under the law, was a sweeping victory for the Department of Justice's anti-trust division and, because of its importance as a precedent and the bearing it may have on the Department's attitude in its pending suit against the eight major distributors, gives rise to the hopes of the exhibitors that relief from monopolistic practices will be forthcoming shortly. The full text of the decree in the Crescent Case was published in last week's issue.

The data concerning Crescent's franchise and film rental deals, which appears on the back page of this issue, has been compiled by Colonel Harry A. Cole, president of Allied Theatre Owners of Texas, and has been taken from the original contracts, franchises, and other evidence filed as exhibits with the court during the trial.

While in some situations the information regarding a deal is not very specific, on the whole, one gets a pretty general idea of the low film prices enjoyed by the Crescent controlled circuits. For instance, Paramount's deal with the Crescent Amusement Company, the parent corporation, covering theatres in twenty-five towns ranging in population from 900 to 36,975, calls for 4 features @ 40%, and the balance on flat rentals. Few details of this deal are available, but as an example, Gallatin, Tenn., with a population of 4,829, buys 4 features @ 40%; 8 @ \$25.00; 10 @ \$20.00; and the balance at \$10.00. The Warner Brothers deal with this company, now in effect, is not very specific; eleven of the twenty-five towns, with populations varying from 5,609 to 16,604, had 24 features on percentage and the balance on flat rentals. The other fourteen towns, with populations from 900 to 36,975 had flat rentals with no percentage. The Fox franchise from 1936 to 1939 was a flat sum deal with an average rental of \$26.50 for each feature in each town.

In Nashville, Tenn., a city with a population of 175,000, we find that Warners had sold Crescent's eight subsequent-run theatres on a selective contract that called for 25 features @ \$10.00. This deal is now in effect.

The Fox deal with Rockwood Amusements, Inc., up to 1939, covering theatres in twelve towns with populations ranging from 1500 to 4397, was a flat sum deal of 40 features @ \$3.90 each feature.

The information compiled by Colonel Cole is eye-opening. If an exhibitor with a theatre in a town that compares in size to one shown on the list will match his film rental deals against those of Crescent and its affiliates, he will have a better idea of the exorbitant rentals he has been and still is paying, and how impossible it is for him to compete with large circuits, which, by reason of their tremendous buying power and the favoritism extended to them by the distributors, at all times retain the upper hand.

The deals made by the Crescent controlled circuits should be studied carefully by the exhibitor, and the information should then be used to combat the many fanciful arguments of the film salesman, who, either under orders from his superiors or through a desire to better his own standing, demands ever-increasing rentals without regard for the inability of the exhibitor to meet these prices. No consideration is given to the fact that war-time conditions, though of benefit to some exhibitors, has been ruinous to many, because of shifting populations, extended runs in the first-run theatres, moveovers, gas and tire rationing, and many other factors directly or indirectly related to the war.

ORDER YOUR COAL NOW

Joseph P. Eastman, Director of the Office of Defense Transportation, has issued a statement urging all consumers of coal to safeguard themselves against possible shortages by placing their orders now for next winter's supply of coal.

Mr. Eastman points out that there are not enough coal cars and locomotives available to take care of the country's needs during the cold winter months. In order for the railroads to meet prospective demands, it is necessary for them to haul coal during the warm spring and summer months, as well as in the fall and winter months.

This statement was issued before the coal strike, which, at this writing, is still in progress. This strike is causing the nation's coal stockpiles to diminish rapidly, and to build up these stockpiles after the strike will add to the railroads' burden and delay further the delivery of coal. For that reason, the wise exhibitor who depends on coal for the heating of his theatre will protect himself for the future by heeding Mr. Eastman's warning and placing his order for coal now. Although delivery may be delayed, it is better to have the delay occur during the warm months when it will not affect the operation of your theatre.

**"She Has What It Takes" with
Jinx Falkenburg and Tom Neal**

(Columbia, April 15; time, 66 min.)

The best that can be said for this comedy with music is that it may serve as a second feature in neighborhood theatres. The story offers little in the way of originality, and the treatment is routine. There are a few pleasant dance and song sequences, and quite a bit of footage is given over to the Vagabonds, a comedy-song quartet, and to the Radio Rogues, who impersonate many famous stars. As a matter of fact, these last two give the film its most entertaining moments:—

When Jinx Falkenburg, singer in a second-rate road show, learns of the death of a once-famous actress, whose last name was similar to her own, she goes to New York and introduces herself to Tom Neal, Broadway columnist, as the famous star's daughter. Recalling that Jinx's "mother" had helped to make many Broadway producers wealthy, Neal seeks to have one of them give Jinx a part in a show. All turn him down except Joe King, who offers to star Jinx in his show as soon as he can obtain the necessary financial backing. A few of the famous star's friends, learning of King's intentions, raise enough money for him to produce the show. Neal publicizes Jinx in his column, and she seems destined to become a success. Meanwhile King notices that Jinx's mannerisms are different from those of her "mother." When he mentions this fact, she readily confesses the hoax. Realizing that if Jinx were exposed it would endanger the investment of their friends, King advises her to continue with the deception. Everything goes well until Constance Worth, Neal's former girl-friend and rival columnist, suspects that Jinx is an imposter. With the aid of a fake married couple, who pose as friends of Jinx's "mother," Constance succeeds in trapping Jinx, and prepares to expose her on opening night. When Neal learns from King that Jinx had continued the deception against her will, he determines to help her. He manages to have all the people connected with the expose kidnapped. Jinx goes on with the show and, during intermission, delivers a touching speech to the audience, revealing the truth about herself. The audience admires her for her honesty, and acclaims her as a new star.

Paul Yawitz wrote the screen play, Colbert Clark produced it, and Charles Barton directed it. The cast includes Mat Willis, George McKay and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Two Senoritas from Chicago" with
Joan Davis and Jinx Falkenburg**

(Columbia, June 10; time, 68 min.)

This comedy with music will have to depend on the popularity of Joan Davis to put it across. The story is silly and only now and then amusing. The action, however, moves at a steady pace, alternating between comedy and tuneful musical interludes. In spite of the fact that Joan Davis' comedy antics are based on some old gags, she manages to provoke most of the laughter. A mild romance is worked into the plot, but it is of minor importance. Theatres that cater to audiences that are not too discriminating will find it a satisfactory program filler:—

Joan Davis, maid in a Chicago hotel, is also an

agent for Jinx Falkenburg and Ann Savage, chorus girls, who, too, were working as maids in the hotel. When Joan finds in a wastebasket a discarded play manuscript that had been written by two Portuguese playwrights, who had lived in the hotel, she sends it to Emory Parnell, a Broadway producer. Parnell invites her to come to New York. Unable to contact the actual authors, Joan arranges with Jinx and Ann to pose as the sisters of the Portuguese playwrights. The trio travels to New York where arrangements to produce the play are completed, with Ann and Jinx given leading roles. Leslie Brooks and Ramsey Ames, two rival show-girls, threaten to expose Jinx and Ann unless they are given parts. Bob Haynes, Parnell's assistant, who had fallen in love with Jinx, agrees to employ Leslie and Ramsey; they, too, pose as Portuguese. Joan's troubles begin when she learns that the playwrights had sold the play to Douglas Leavitt, a rival producer, who had hired Leslie and Ramsey to play the leads. Joan confesses to Parnell and talks him into arranging a deal with Leavitt so that the latter will take over the scenery as well as the services of Jinx and Ann. Leslie and Ramsey, however, reveal the hoax, and Joan, Jinx, Ann and Parnell are arrested for plagiarism. Joan accepts the blame, and the other three are released. Meanwhile Haynes, who had written a play of his own, had arranged matters so that his play could open in Parnell's theatre on the originally scheduled opening night. Joan manages to escape from jail and arrives backstage just as Parnell signs a contract with Haynes, agreeing to finance the show.

Stanley Rubin and Maurice Tombragel wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Frank Woodruff directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"That Nazty Nuisance" with
Bobby Watson and Joe Devlin**

(United Artists, release date not set; time, 43 min.)

For people who welcome an opportunity to laugh at Hitler and Company, this streamlined comedy will serve the purpose. It is a sequel to Hal Roach's "The Devil with Hitler" and, as in that picture, the action is composed of broad slapstick. This time Hitler and his Axis partners are captured by a group of shipwrecked American sailors when they visit a tropical isle to negotiate a treaty with the native chief. It is a hodge-podge of silly situations in which the Axis members are burlesqued to the hilt as they continuously try to double-cross each other when faced with danger. On the whole, the picture is good for a number of hearty laughs. Discriminating audiences, however, may find it a bit boring:—

Hitler (Bobby Watson), furious because Von Pop-off (Henry Victor) had failed to negotiate a treaty with the Chief (Ian Keith) of a tropical island, decides to visit the Chief himself. As he prepares to board the submarine that is to take him to his destination, Hitler is joined by Mussolini (Joe Devlin) and Suki Yaki (Johnny Arthur), who demand that they be taken along. Meanwhile a lifeboat filled with American seamen, whose ship had been torpedoed, arrives at the island. Benson (Frank Faylen), one of the seamen, meets Kela (Jean Porter), a native girl, who assisted a magician. Kela is disturbed because her

employer had become intoxicated and would be unable to perform for the Chief that evening. Just then Hitler arrives on the island and is recognized by Benson. Seeing an opportunity to square matters with the dictators, Benson changes clothes with the drunken magician and persuades Kela to let him perform that evening in place of her partner. The Chief, an obstreperous sort, insists on dining and wining his guests, and is quick to show his displeasure if they do not appear to enjoy his hospitality. Meanwhile Benson had arranged for his buddies to overpower the submarine's crew. When the feast is over and all retire for the night, Benson visits the dictators and convinces them that the Chief intended to behead them. They flee to the submarine, only to become prisoners of war. Von Popoff, in an unguarded moment destroys the ship's controls. The submarine runs wild and is beached. Believing that the ship was resting at the bottom of the sea, Hitler demands that he be sent to the surface through the torpedo tubes. Benson obliges, and all three partners sail through the air, landing head first on a sandy beach, lined up like three ostriches with their heads buried in the sand.

Earle Snell and Clarence Tryon wrote the screen play, and Glenn Tryon produced and directed it.

**"All By Myself" with Patric Knowles,
Evelyn Ankers and Rosemary Lane**
(Universal, June 11; time, 62 min.)

An entertaining light program comedy with some music. The story itself is familiar, but it offers a few novel twists, some brisk dialogue, and has good comedy situations. The fact that it holds one's attention throughout is owed to the deft direction and the engaging performances. Evelyn Ankers is given an opportunity to display her talents as a comedienne, and she shows up to good advantage. Another attraction, particularly for women, is the variety of beautiful clothes worn by Miss Ankers. The few musical interludes are pleasant:—

Evelyn Ankers, chic and sharp member of Neil Hamilton's advertising agency, is responsible for the firm's holding on to the account of Grant Mitchell, a tobacco tycoon. When Hamilton, whom she loved, becomes engaged to Rosemary Lane, a cabaret singer, Evelyn withdraws from the firm. Brooding and ill, Evelyn visits a doctor's office where she meets Patric Knowles, a handsome physician, who, though a bachelor, led his female clients to believe that he was married, in order to stop them from forcing their attentions on him. Evelyn, however, learns from his nurse that he is single, and traps him into posing as her fiancé; she hoped to win Hamilton back by arousing his jealousy. She arranges a dinner date with Hamilton and Rosemary at a night-club. There, one of Knowles' female clients concludes that Evelyn is his wife, and he hastily "confesses" that they had been secretly "married." When the "marriage" is publicized in the gossip columns, Evelyn decides to have some fun with Knowles; she goes on a shopping spree and charges her purchases to his account. She becomes panicky, however, when Knowles asserts that he is entitled to husbandly privileges. Meanwhile Hamilton and Rosemary marry, and go to Niagra Falls for a honeymoon. The newlyweds are separated when

Mitchell summons Hamilton to Chicago. Piqued because Hamilton had left her alone, Rosemary returns to New York, where she learns that Evelyn, too, had gone to Chicago. Suspecting the worst, Rosemary files suit for divorce and threatens to name Evelyn as correspondent. Knowles sportingly insists that Evelyn marry him so that she could obtain a divorce and marry Hamilton. All turns out well when Hamilton and Rosemary reconcile, and Evelyn and Knowles decide to remain married.

Hugh Wedloch, Jr., and Howard Snyder wrote the screen play, Bernard W. Burton produced it, and Felix Feist directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Terror House" with an all-English cast
(Producers Releasing Corp., April 19; time 62 min.)

This British-made melodrama is suitable program fare for the ardent followers of spine-chilling films. The story is neither cheerful nor pleasant; yet those who enjoy pictures of this type should find it satisfying. Routine tricks are employed to create an eerie atmosphere, and in some spots they are properly effective. The action is slow-moving, but the constant danger to the heroine holds one in suspense. The film's chief fault lies in the thick English accent of the players; much of the dialogue is hard to understand:—

With school at an end, Joyce Howard, a teacher, decides to visit the desolate Yorkshire moors where one of her girl-friends had disappeared a year previously under mysterious circumstances. She is accompanied by Tucker McGuire, another teacher. On the train Joyce meets John Fernold, a young physician, who tries to dissuade the girls from making the trip, but to no avail. On a walking trip across the moors the girls are overtaken by a violent storm and manage to find shelter in a large house owned by James Mason, a recluse. Mason's queer manner alarms the girls. Flood waters prevent the girls from leaving the house for a few days, during which time Mason and Joyce are attracted to each other. Joyce learns that a horrible war experience had left him unbalanced, and that he lived in the house with Mary Clare, his housekeeper, and Wilfred Lawson, a manservant. Both had gone to the village and could not return because of the flood. When the waters subside, Tucker takes her leave, but Joyce remains behind; something about the wierd house led her to believe that she would find a clue to her missing friend. Miss Clare, a kindly person, urges Joyce to leave for her own safety, but does not explain her reasons. Later Joyce learns that moonlight filled Mason with a desire to kill. Joyce suggests to Mason that he go to an eminent specialist, but Mason, fearing that he would be given up as hopeless, refuses to do so. Subsequent events lead Joyce to believe that Mason had murdered her friend, but she eventually learns that the real murderers are Miss Clare and Lawson; they had led Mason to believe that he was mentally unbalanced and that he had murderous tendencies, so that they could continue in his employ and be paid for their silence.

Alan Kenington wrote the screen play, John Argyle produced it, and Leslie Arliss directed it.

Not for children.

TOWN		FILM DEALS AND FRANCHISES		POP.	TOWN	POP.	FILM DEALS AND FRANCHISES	
Crescent (Parent Corp.)								
Alabama City, Ala.	8,544	Paramount: All towns—4 features @ 40%; balance flat rentals. (Few details are available on this deal, but as an example, Gallatin had 4 features @ 40%; 8 @ \$25.00; 10 @ \$20.00; and the balance @ \$10.00.)	Warner: Franchise 1939-43: Towns marked * had 24 features on percentage; balance, flat rentals. All other towns, no percentage.		Rockwood, Tenn.	3,981	Paramount: Franchise to 1943: 40 feature commitment; 4 @ 40%; balance flat rental down to \$8.00. Warner: Franchise to 1943: 26 selected features, all flat rental; some towns \$11.00, some \$10.00.	Fox: Franchise to 1939 (renewed, but terms not given): Flat sum deal, \$155 per town for 40 selected features, or \$3.90 per feature.
Bowling Green, Ky.	14,585				Central City, Ky.	4,199		
Brownsville, Tenn.	4,012				Providence, Ky.	4,397		
*Clarksville, Tenn.	11,831				Huntingdon, Tenn.	1,432		
*Cleveland, Tenn.	11,351				McKenzie, Tenn.	2,000		
*Columbia, Tenn.	10,579				Guthrie, Ky.			
*Decatur, Ala.	16,604				Rogersville, Tenn.			
*Dyersburg, Tenn.	10,034				Grenville, Ky.	1,500		
Earlington, Ky.	2,878				Cowan, Tenn.	to		
Franklin, Ky.	3,940				Lake City, Tenn.	2,500		
Gadsden, Ala.	36,975				Manchester, Tenn.			
Gallatin, Tenn.	4,829				Tracy City			
*Greenville, Tenn.	6,784							
Harriman, Tenn.	5,620							
*Hopkinsville, Ky.	11,724				Cherokee			
Lebanon, Tenn.	5,950				*Erwin, Tenn.	3,350		
Madison, Tenn.	900				*La Follett, Tenn.	4,010		
*Madisonville, Ky.	8,209				*Lenoir, Tenn.	4,373		
*Maryville, Tenn.	5,609				*Sweetwater, Tenn.	2,593		
Morristown, Tenn.	8,050				Brownsville, Tenn.	4,013		
*Murphreesboro, Tenn.	9,495				*Spruce Pine, N. C.			
*Paris, Tenn.	6,395				Madisonville, N. C.			
Princeton, Ky.	5,389				Marshall, N. C.			
Springfield, Tenn.	6,688				Oneida			
*Union City, Tenn.	7,236							
NASHVILLE, TENN. 175,000					Ruffin			
4 Downtown Theatres					*Hickman, Tenn.	2,268		
8 Subsequent Theatres					Covington, Tenn.	3,513		
					Greenfield, Tenn.	1,509		
					Halls, Tenn.	1,511		
					Martin, Tenn.	3,587		
					Newbern, Tenn.	1,740		
					Chickasaw			
Muscle Shoals					Humbolt, Tenn.	5,160		
Florence, Ala.	15,043				Alamo, Tenn.	1,137		
Sheffield, Ala.	7,933				Milan, Tenn.	3,035		
Tuscomb, Ala.	5,515				Benton, Ky.	1,906		
Athens, Ala.	4,342							
					Kentucky			
					*Elizabethtown, Ky.	3,667		
					Dickson			
Lyric					Dickson, Tenn.	3,504		
Huntsville, Ala.	13,050				Laurensburg			
					Laurensburg, Tenn.	3,807		
					Midstate			
Cumberland					Tompkinsville, Ky.	1,438		
McMinnville, Tenn.	4,649				Cookville, Tenn.	4,364		
Tullahoma, Tenn.	4,549				Carthage, Tenn.	1,513		
Fayetteville, Tenn.	4,684				Burksville, Ky.	1,092		
7 Others	1,500 to 2,500							

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SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 1943

No. 24

MGM AGAIN TAKES THE LEAD

"If there is a legitimate theatre operation in the United States in a desperate position . . . I am deeply concerned about it and I want to know the facts. Many times I have said in the past that we do not expect to make a profit on the theatre owner's losses. Many times I have thrown open the door of our offices for any theatre owner who has a complaint, and who can within reason prove his case."

The aforementioned is from an address made by William F. Rodgers, vice-president and general sales manager of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, in March 1942, before a gathering of industry leaders and trade press representatives at a meeting of the now defunct UMPI.

These were not idle words that Bill Rodgers spoke, for shortly thereafter, in May 1942, he called a special meeting of MGM's district and division managers for the purpose of considering the small-town exhibitor's plight caused by war-time conditions. At that time Mr. Rodgers announced that each exhibitor's situation would be examined, and that, where relief was needed, it would be granted. He instructed his field forces to approach all situations with an open mind and to make proper recommendations.

From time to time Mr. Rodgers has reaffirmed his company's policy of granting relief to exhibitors whose grievances were justified. His most recent reaffirmation is in the form of a letter to his branch managers, in which he reminds them of MGM's policy, and outlines a specific course for them to follow in their handling of exhibitor complaints that are deserving of adjudication.

Mr. Rodgers' remarks should be of interest to every exhibitor; they are clear, sincere, and to the point, and they herald a happy relationship between buyer and seller, the sort that other distributor heads might do well to adopt. Here is Mr. Rodgers' statement:

"At a business meeting of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio (Allied) held at Columbus, Ohio, Tuesday, May 11, we discussed quite frankly our relationship with our customers.

"To avoid the possibility of any misunderstanding, I quote from my notes specific statements made regarding the position of our company, containing, as you will note, a re-declaration of our policy of fair dealing and a specific course we are prepared to follow in a sincere desire to relieve aggravated situations where exhibitors are having difficulty in operating profitably:

"1. If we make a mistake in designating a picture in a bracket higher than justified by results, it is not necessary or expected that our customers be required to ask for an adjustment in terms, but when called to

our attention with the supporting facts, and they must be facts, we will re-classify the picture in the bracket where it rightfully belongs.

"2. That there is no policy in our company that prevents one of our top bracket pictures being re-classified even to the balance or lower bracket, if that is the proper classification based on results at that theatre.

"3. That we intend to retain our right of designation as there is no other means we know of to intelligently price our merchandise.

"4. That we intend to continue to sell on the sliding scale; that this basis is considered by us and by thousands of our customers as being a fair method of dealing.

"5. That we would, where justified, charge the unit figure if results of record disclosed a hardship and by hardship I mean either a loss, or a minimum profit to the theatre on pictures of ours played on this basis.

"6. That we recognize the effect, because of shifting populations, industrial activity, and other reasons, in some small localities, some of the subsequent runs, and I mean later runs in cities and small towns, and are prepared in such situations to adjust our terms to meet present day business levels. That in such situations we are prepared to forego so-called preferred time in exchange for what our managers consider its equivalent in the way of mid-week playing time. In such instances, it can be incorporated in the contract with our customers as optional.

"7. That this is a matter of negotiation between our representatives and customers, and, in our desire to help in specific situations that need help, it is not to be considered that we are going to forego entirely preferred time, because, to the contrary, we expect to continue to seek, and we hope, get our pictures played under the most favorable circumstances. But we do want to do everything in our power to assist deserving cases.

"8. That we deplore the thought expressed that exhibitors had to come, as they cited it, with 'hats in hand' looking for an adjustment. That we said it is very definitely contrary to our policy, and the sliding scale was devised to automatically take care of an adjustment. So far as flat rentals are concerned, we can have no knowledge of the results unless we are informed, and we are prepared to rectify any unintentional error made by re-classifying the picture immediately when authentic facts justifying it are presented.

"9. The attending delegates were informed that our branch and district managers have authority to

(Continued on last page)

"Hitler's Hangman" with John Carradine, Ralph Morgan and Patricia Morison

(MGM, no release date set; time, 83 min.)

An interesting dramatization of the rape of Lidice, the Czechoslovakian town that was destroyed by the Nazis in reprisal for the assassination of Reich Protector Reinhard Heydrich, "Hitler's Hangman." Although it has been produced with care, the picture may suffer at the box-office, because of its similarity in theme and in treatment to other pictures released recently. The exploitable title, however, may offset this factor. As usual, the ruthlessness of the Nazis is emphasized. Some of the situations stir one's emotions deeply. The most emotion-stirring situation is towards the end where the villagers are herded in the town square. The children are torn from their mothers and sent to Nazi schools; the women are carted away to concentration camps; and the men are lined up for execution. John Carradine, as "Heydrich," is effective. The others in the cast perform adequately:—

Karel Varva (Alan Curtis), an exiled Czech patriot, returns to Lidice by parachuting from an Allied bomber. He attempts to stir the townspeople to revolt against the Nazis, but Hanka (Ralph Morgan), one of the town's leaders, advises against resistance. Jarmila (Patricia Morison), Karel's sweetheart and Hanka's daughter, sides with Karel. Heydrich (John Carradine), the Reich Protector, is feared by the townspeople. He ruthlessly closes the town's university, and sends the girl students to Nazi soldier camps. On one of his trips through Lidice, Heydrich halts a religious procession and provokes the beloved village Priest beyond endurance when he wipes his feet on the altar cloth. This sacrilege outrages the Priest, and he is shot dead when he moves towards Heydrich. Angered, Hanka and the villagers join Karel and form an underground movement. Meanwhile the wife of the town's German Mayor, embittered because both her sons had died for the Nazi cause, informs Hanka that Heydrich would drive through the village on the following morning. Hanka, aided by Karel and Jarmila, wrecks Heydrich's automobile with a hand grenade. Ten days later Heydrich dies. Himmler (Howard Freeman) takes charge of the investigation. Unable to find the assassins, Himmler orders the town destroyed by artillery fire. The women are sent to concentration camps; the children are placed in Nazi schools; and the men of the town are lined up and shot. They die singing the Czech national anthem.

Peretz Hirshbein, Melvin Levy, and Doris Malloy wrote the screen play, Seymour Nebenzal produced it, and Douglas Sirk directed it. The cast includes Edgar Kennedy, Emil Stossel, Al Shean, Blanche Yurka, Tully Marshall, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Background to Danger" with George Raft, Sydney Greenstreet and Peter Lorre

(Warner Bros., July 3; time, 80 min.)

The action fans will find this spy melodrama to their liking, for it moves at a fast pace, holding one's interest throughout. With Turkey as the background, the story revolves around an American secret agent, who becomes involved in a fight between Nazi and Russian agents over forged documents that purportedly revealed a Soviet plan to invade Turkey. The story is highly far-fetched, but it offers opportunities for exciting action, and holds one in suspense. The popularity of the players should be of considerable help at the box-office:—

On a train en route to Ankara, George Raft, American secret agent, meets Osa Massen, who asks him to keep an envelope for her and to bring it to her hotel after they reach their destination. Before leaving to meet Osa, Raft examines the envelope's contents and finds that it contains Russian plans for the invasion of Turkey. After hiding the plans, he goes to Osa's hotel room where he finds that she had been murdered. As he examines the body, Peter Lorre enters the room. Raft, though pursued by Lorre, manages to escape.

Returning to his hotel room, Raft is confronted by Kurt Katch and two of his henchmen, who represent themselves as police. They accuse him of Osa's murder and demand the plans. When Raft denies knowledge of either matter, they arrest him. Instead of police headquarters, Katch takes him to the villa of Sydney Greenstreet, a Nazi agent. When Raft refuses to talk, Greenstreet orders Katch to flog him. Raft is saved from the torture by the arrival of Lorre and Brenda Marshall, Lorre's sister, who, at gun-point, rescue him. Later, Lorre and Brenda inform Raft that they are Soviet agents, and ask him for the plans. They explain that Osa had been a traitorous Soviet agent and that she was in league with Greenstreet. The plans were false, and Greenstreet's objective was to have them published, thus rousing neutral Turkey against Russia. Raft doubts their story, but agrees to surrender the plans only at the Russian embassy, after Lorre and Brenda identify themselves properly. Returning to his hotel, Raft finds his room a shambles and the plans missing. He suspects Lorre and Brenda of having double-crossed him. Raft determines to regain the plans. After a series of adventures in which he dodges the Turkish police, and the Nazi and Soviet agents, Raft succeeds in foiling the Nazi plot. Greenstreet is turned over to the authorities for deportation.

W. R. Burnett wrote the screen play, Jerry Wald produced it, and Raoul Walsh directed it. The cast includes Turhan Bey, Frank Puglia, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Kansan" with Richard Dix, Albert Dekker and Jane Wyatt

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 79 min.)

The western fans should enjoy this melodrama. In spite of the fact that the story offers little that is new, it has the ingredients that appeal to the followers of action pictures—fast horseback-riding, gun fights, and exciting chases; and the hero is, as usual, courageous in the face of danger. An outstanding sequence is a terrific free-for-all battle in a saloon; it is both humorous and thrilling. There is some comedy and a suggestion of a romance:—

Richard Dix, a stranger in the town of Broken Lance, is wounded in a gun battle with Jesse James' gang when he prevents them from robbing the local bank. Dix is hospitalized upon orders of Albert Dekker, the bank's owner. Dekker, who owned most of the town, seeks to maintain his grip on the community. He arranges for Dix to be elected as Marshal while he is still convalescing in the hospital. Because of his interest in Jane Wyatt, who operated the town hotel, Dix decides to accept the position. Victor Jory, gambler and happy-go-lucky brother of Dekker, is in love with Jane. Together with Jory, Dix goes on an inspection tour. A few miles out of town he comes upon a fight between Eugene Pallette, a cattleman, and some guards stationed on land owned by Dekker. The dispute had arisen over Pallette's refusal to pay \$5,000 to drive his cattle across the land. It soon becomes obvious to Dix that Dekker was taking advantage of the people, and he determines to trap him. Realizing that Dix intended to work against him and not with him, Dekker plans to discredit him. He plots a robbery of his own bank, and persuades Jory to commit the crime. Dix tracks down Jory, but Jane, lying, establishes an alibi for him. When Jory learns that she had lied to prevent him from shooting Dix, he returns the stolen money. Through information given him by Jory, Dix legally imprisons Dekker. A gang headed by Frank McDonald, who had been working with Dekker, plans to raid the town and free the banker. Jory joins up with McDonald's gang, and sends word to Dix of the impending attack. Jory sacrifices his life by deliberately leading the gang into a trap set by Dix. Freed of Dekker's grip, the townspeople celebrate the engagement of Jane and Dix.

Harold Shumate wrote the screen play, Harry Sherman produced it, and George Archainbaud directed it. The cast includes Robert Armstrong, Willie Best, and others.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF INJUSTICE CAUSED BY SHORTCOMINGS OF THE CONSENT DECREE

Under the heading, "WELDEN THEATRE CASE," Abram F. Myers, general counsel for Allied States Association, has sent out the following bulletin dated June 4, 1943:

"The decision of the Arbitration Appeal Board in this case (No. 71, June 1) adds to the fast accumulating evidence of the contempt of the consenting defendants for the Consent Decree, the law on which the decree was ostensibly based and the Attorney General of the United States.

"The Welden is a first run theatre in St. Albans, Vt. It had been a satisfactory customer of Paramount. In March, 1942, it joined a buying combine known as Affiliated Theatres Corporation. Thereafter Affiliated bought a block of Paramount pictures for the Welden, first run. When the block containing "Holiday Inn" came along, Paramount insisted upon percentage for that particular picture. Affiliated rejected the group.

"A little later the manager of Affiliated informed the district manager of Paramount that he wished to buy Paramount pictures for the Welden, first run, upon the distributor's terms.

"At this stage Paramount chose to exert monopolistic power reserved to it under the Consent Decree in an obvious attempt to break up Affiliated. The district manager orally, and the general sales manager by letter informed Affiliated, in substance, that it would have to buy Paramount pictures for all the theatres represented by it, or for none.

"Paramount adopted as a national policy in reference to its releases during the 1942-1943 season, that it would sell its "best" pictures on a percentage basis. While Affiliated was unwilling to buy Paramount pictures on a percentage basis for the other theatres for which it acted, it was willing to do so for the Welden.

"And so Paramount snatched the first run of its pictures away from the Welden (a modern 700 seater, charging 30c-35c) and gave it to the Empire (an old-fashioned 400 seater, charging 11c-30c).

"Sec. X being inapplicable, the Welden filed a claim under Sec. VI for 'some run' of pictures on terms 'not calculated to defeat the purpose of this Section.' It was a desperate move since, obviously, what complainant wanted was the first run of the pictures. The Arbitrator's decision evidenced his righteous indignation at Paramount's arbitrary attitude. He concluded, in effect, that the decree must afford some relief for so grave an injustice and he made an award in favor of the complainant.

"A SHAMEFUL RECORD

"The Appeal Board in reversing the Arbitrator gave effect to the language of Section VI which vests in the distributors sole discretion as to the run to be offered. In doing so the Board bared the shameful record of Paramount in this case.

"The Board found from the undisputed facts that Paramount's refusal to continue licensing its pictures first run to the Welden 'was due solely to the unwillingness of Affiliated Theatres to buy pictures on Paramount's terms for the other theatres represented by it.' The Board pointed out that the decree contemplates that the distributors shall deal with theatres 'on their individual merits.' It castigated Paramount, as follows:

"Paramount's refusal under the circumstances to deal with the Welden on its own merits, when it knew that the Welden was willing to meet its terms and had been a satisfactory customer for years, is a type of discrimination utterly at variance with the spirit of the Decree."

"Paramount's attitude was deliberate, merciless, cold-blooded. As stated by the Board:

"Counsel for Paramount makes no attempt in his brief either to answer or to mitigate the severe criticisms made by the Arbitrator of his client's conduct. He confines his argument wholly to the lack of power of the Arbitrator under the Decree to redress an injustice clearly shown by the record to have been done to the Welden."

"The Board recognized the justice of the Arbitrator's award and set it aside only because under the wording of the decree they felt that the Arbitrator had no power to enter it.¹

"We share the Arbitrator's conviction that the Welden deserves a first run ahead of the Empire, and were it not for the limitations imposed by the Decree we should either direct the restoration of first run to the Welden, which is what complainant really desires and deserves, or else we should affirm the award without question on the ground it does equity and justice between the parties concerned."

"The Board held out a slight hope that in another proceeding 'it may even prove impossible to offer a second run on any terms and conditions whatever which are not calculated to defeat the purpose of Section VI.' By this the Board seems to imply that in such circumstances Paramount could be forced to offer the pictures first run. This seems, on its face, to be illusory and, in any case, the complainant would be deprived of its first run privilege while a doubtful and costly experiment was being made.

"MONOPOLY AT ITS WORST

"This affair did not take place in Allied territory, but the implications of Paramount's action are so grave as to be of interest to all independent exhibitors.

"The compulsory block-booking of pictures was bad enough, but now Paramount moves on to the compulsory block-booking of theatres.

"This is a deliberate attack on independent buying combines and all such organizations and the members thereof should recognize it as such.

"By its action Paramount has served notice on independent buying groups that unless they accept for their entire membership whatever terms it sees fit to demand, the members stand to lose their established runs. Paramount having got away with it, there is nothing to prevent other distributors from following its lead.

"Independent buying combines are defensive organizations designed to protect exhibitors in some measure against the distributors' insatiable greed for higher and still higher film rentals.² For these to be crushed under cover of the Consent Decree will be the final grim absurdity in a long tragedy of errors.

"Paramount's conduct is in strange contrast to the attitude of itself and other major distributors in condoning and even defending the greedy tactics of the big circuits which they control or which they indulge with a view to acquiring them ultimately.³ Concentrated buying power becomes obnoxious to the distributors only when it is attempted by independent exhibitors.

"The decision demonstrates that by reserving to the distributors uncontrolled discretion over runs, the Consent Decree not only has left the monopoly intact but actually fosters and protects it. The decision ushers in a reign of terror under which exhibitors not only will be intimidated against joining buying combines, but will be afraid to resist distributors' unreasonable demands in bargaining singly, lest they be deprived of their runs and otherwise penalized and harassed.

"THE ATTORNEY GENERAL SHOULD ACT

"The attitude of the consenting defendants in this and numerous other cases demonstrates that their will to monopoly has not been curbed; that they do not respect the anti-trust laws and will not obey them unless compelled to do so. Throughout the test period under the Consent Decree evidence of this defiant attitude has been piling up. This latest example constitutes an affront to the Attorney General which he can not ignore if respect for law is to be maintained."

¹ The Board also followed numerous of its own decisions: Lakeview, No. 58; Tracy, No. 59; Marre, No. 60; Heinew, No. 63; Sosna, No. 70.

² Said the Board: "This is not the case of an exhibitor attempting to use the concentrated economic power of a group of theatres to obtain favorable terms from the distributor, but that of a distributor arbitrarily penalizing an independent exhibitor for employing a booking agent with which the distributor was in controversy as to other theatres."

³ Compare *Interstate Circuit v. U. S.*, 306 U.S. 208; *Paramount v. Langer*, 23 Fed. Supp. 890; Judge Davies' Findings *U.S. v. Crescent Amusement Co.*, Civil Action No. 54, U.S.D.C., Mid. Tenn.; Report of Allied General Counsel dated April 30, 1943.

adjudicate what appear to be unintentional errors; that they can when justified adjudicate any business contracts.

"10. That we do not want, much less expect, any unfair terms or advantages.

"11. That we do not exact as a policy, home office approval of re-classification or adjustment in terms when presented with facts.

"12. That it is not necessary to come or write to New York for relief, but if it is not granted where absolutely justified they are invited to lay their case before us for consideration and attention.

"It was made plain that our offer of help is not intended for the 'chronic kicker' who complains because of habit without foundation, but it does apply to those who because of conditions need and deserve consideration and help."

The flexibility of this policy practically guarantees an exhibitor against suffering a loss on Metro pictures, for, in addition to recognizing that ever-changing business conditions necessitate adjustments, it takes into consideration the fact that a top-bracket picture may be a huge success in one situation and only mediocre in another. Hence, the policy allows for a reclassification of that picture to a lower bracket "if that is the proper classification based on results at that theatre." This is as it should be, for many pictures that are patronized heavily in large cities have little appeal in small-town and rural areas. The subsequent-run theatres in large cities, too, are protected by this arrangement; the abnormal extended runs now enjoyed by the first-run theatres oftentimes "milks" the subsequent-run exhibitor's district, not only of the extra attendance he might have enjoyed, but also of his limited patronage.

HARRISON'S REPORTS takes this opportunity of commending Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for having taken the lead once again in an attempt to bring about a better understanding between the exhibitors and itself. Such an understanding is sorely needed at this time. Metro's policy is further proof of Bill Rodgers' sincere desire for unity in the industry.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

With a view of enlisting the support of the film companies to help discourage juvenile delinquency and curb vandalism in theatres, the committee recently appointed by Allied States Association, composed of Jack Kirsch, Dr. J. B. Fishman, and Pete J. Wood, have suggested to the sales heads of the distributing companies that a single-reel be made designed to encourage the youth of the nation to devote their energies toward aiding the war effort.

The committee pointed out the seriousness of the situation and called attention to the fact that in some localities the problem of juvenile delinquency has become so alarming that curfew regulations have been passed by local authorities prohibiting minors from being outdoors after certain hours. It pointed out also that, unless something is done to curb this growing menace, reform groups will attempt to lay the blame for these outbreaks of juvenile delinquency and vandalism on the doorstep of the motion picture industry.

The committee suggested that each distributor who releases Victory reels should produce a single reel depicting the valuable contribution that can be made to the war effort by the youth of the nation. The pictures would point out the serious harm done by acts of vandalism, and would direct an appeal to the patriotism of the youngsters.

The first company to respond to the committee's appeal is Warner Brothers. Ben Kalmenson, Warners' general sales manager, has advised Mr. Kirsch that his company has in mind, for early production, a two reel story by Booth Tarkington, titled "Penrod's Junior Army." According to Mr. Kalmenson, the picture would outline the many ways in which youths can contribute to the winning of the war. Mr. Kalmenson has forwarded to his studio the committee's idea with the suggestion that it be incorporated in the short subject, if possible.

RKO RADIO PICTURES INC.

RKO Building

Rockefeller Center, New York, N. Y.

Office of the
President

June 1, 1943.

Mr. Pete Harrison
1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Dear Pete:

Over the holiday I had my first opportunity to read your issue of May 22nd. While I do not care to inject my personal opinion in the discussion concerning criticism directed against our industry in the "Stars and Stripes," I must express my amazement over your selection of "Bombardier" as an example of "that which embarrasses the American soldier abroad and at home." I do not know why you chose this inspiring picture to illustrate your point in such an editorial.

I attended the premiere of "Bombardier" in Albuquerque; then went to the openings in San Antonio, Houston, Ft. Worth, and Dallas where all engagements broke records as have many subsequent showings. In each city hundreds of service men of various types were present.

If you had sat in these theatres, as I did, observing how greatly these service men as well as the civilian men, women and children enjoyed the picture, you would realize how far "off the beam" you are in your contention.

The U. S. Army Theatres operate over one thousand theatres for soldiers in this country. I suggest you get *their* report of how our boys in uniform like "Bombardier." I have heard nothing but praise for it. The Overseas Motion Picture Service of the War Department wrote: "The Army is sending this picture to the boys overseas just as soon as we can get prints."

Regarding the particular situation involving Randolph Scott, which you claim to be one of the "unheard of feats of valor," yours is the first adverse criticism of this sequence. I am sure that you have found in the daily newspapers a good many true stories of the war, passed by our official censors, which abound in almost unbelievable heroics much more implausible than Randy's feat, and of which anyone could easily say: "If you saw that on the screen you'd say it could only happen in Hollywood." According to your theory, our soldiers would blush to see Sergeant York's accomplishment, but we all know that was true.

I respect your opinion on pictures, Pete. However, in this instance I feel you have done one of our most important pictures a grave injustice.

With best wishes.

Sincerely,

NED E. DEPINET.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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HERE AND THERE

ACCORDING TO *Motion Picture Daily*, "virtually all national distributors say they stand ready these days to lend a sympathetic ear to individual requests of exhibitors for the reallocation of a percentage picture from an originally designated higher bracket, to a lower one, when the exhibitor can convince them that such an adjustment is warranted."

"This, in essence," says the *Daily*, "is the answer of most companies to the recent declaration of William F. Rodgers, vice-president in charge of distribution, that MGM is ready to reclassify percentage allocations provided box-office results warrant them."

Except for Columbia's executives, "who were not available for comment," and Warner Brothers' officials, "who declined to discuss company policy," the *Daily* reports that the home office distribution heads it contacted declared that reallocation requests will receive the consideration they merit. The *Daily* makes no mention of RKO's stand.

Although most of the major distributors have indicated their willingness to revise their film deals in justifiable situations, none dealt with the problem in the straight-forward manner of MGM, which went on record with a letter to its branch managers specifically outlining its policy and instructing and authorizing them to reallocate pictures "if we make a mistake in designating a picture in a higher bracket than justified by the results." The full text of this letter was reproduced in last week's issue.

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not maintain that the policy outlined by MGM is a solution to the basic problems of the exhibitor. It does maintain that such a policy, when announced with clarity and sincerity, makes for a better understanding between the exhibitor and the distributor.

Instead of being ambiguous and circuitous, the other distributors would do well to clarify their positions regarding the reallocation of pictures that do not meet with the expected box-office results; the exhibitor would then have faith in his dealings with them.

* * *

BILL SCULLY, VICE PRESIDENT and General Sales Manager of Universal, has announced that, in order to keep as close to the public's pulse as possible, his company would make it a point this year to see that its local offices throughout the country conduct

informal surveys among the exhibitors in an effort to gauge the public's reaction to all types of pictures. Scully stated that Universal did not have any preconceived ideas as to whether or not it will produce pictures dealing with the war, but if such pictures fit in logically with what the public wants, his company would include them in the 1943-44 program. He declared that Universal will endeavor to anticipate trends rather than to follow them.

Universal shows sound judgment in its plan to obtain the views of exhibitors in order to learn what the public likes and dislikes; the exhibitor, if any one, should know.

Judging from the many complaints from exhibitors that the public is surfeited with films dealing with the war, Universal's recognition of the need for diversity in screen entertainment should benefit both the exhibitors and the company.

* * *

BESIDES WARNER BROTHERS, three major distributors have evinced interest in the suggestion of Allied States Association's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency that producers make a series of single reel subjects designed to curb the present wave of vandalism that has gripped many sections of the country.

Neil Agnew, Paramount's General Sales Manager, has advised Jack Kirsch, chairman of the committee, that he is recommending to the War Activities Committee that such a subject be included in the list of proposed Government shorts. Paramount, too, may produce a short treating of the same subject matter.

Tom Connors of Twentieth Century-Fox has stated that his company is giving serious consideration to the suggestion, and that he will take the matter up with his production department to see what can be done.

MGM is expected to produce a two reel subject along the same lines.

According to newspaper reports, the damage being done by roving bands of thoughtless youngsters is reaching serious proportions. Their vandalism has taken a heavy toll of public and private property, as well as of essential war materials. To combat this evil, these shorts should be produced with all possible speed, and exhibitors should arrange to book them as soon as they become available.

"Wings Over the Pacific" with Inez Cooper, Edward Norris and Montagu Love

(Monogram, June 11; time, 60 min.)

Minor program fare. It is another one of those meaningless war melodramas with a peaceful South Pacific isle as its background. The story is very ordinary and the treatment is unimaginative. The picture serves as an opportunity for Inez Cooper to parade around in a sarong and sing a few typical South Sea melodies. She has a good voice, a pleasing personality, and bears a striking resemblance to Hedy Lamarr. But all this is not enough to overcome the poor story material. There is some excitement towards the finish when a Japanese invasion force is annihilated. Most of the action, however, is slow-paced:—

After an aerial dogfight, Edward Norris, an American flier, and Henry Guttman, a Nazi flier attached to Japanese forces, crash in a South Pacific island owned by Montagu Love, who, together with Inez Cooper, his daughter, and Ernie Adams, his servant, had retired there to find peace in a troubled world. Inez and Norris are attracted to each other, and eventually fall in love. Love prevents both men from leaving, so that neither could summon forces to take over the island as a base. Robert Armstrong, a supposedly friendly trader, but in reality a Nazi agent, visits Love for an extended stay. Combining forces, Armstrong and Guttman repair the radio on Norris' damaged plane and secretly send a message to the Japanese, informing them that there is oil on the island and that it was suitable for a base. Guttman is imprisoned for shooting a native guarding Norris' plane, but Armstrong later releases him. Inez accidentally comes upon the two, and Guttman takes her to a remote part of the island where he holds her captive. Later, Armstrong is uncovered as a Nazi and, when he attempts to escape, a native chief kills him. Norris and Love track down Guttman, killing him and rescuing Inez just as a Japanese transport plane, bearing a contingent of soldiers, lands on the beach. With the help of the natives, Norris, Love, and Adams wipe out the attacking force. Norris contacts an American force by radio, and the island is turned over to them as a base.

George Sayre wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Phil Rosen directed it.
Morally suitable for all.

"Thumbs Up" with Brenda Joyce, Elsa Lanchester and Richard Fraser

(Republic, June 24; time, 67 min.)

A mixture of comedy and drama, with a few songs thrown in for good measure, "Thumbs Up" should satisfy as a supporting feature, in spite of the fact that the story and treatment are routine. The action, the background of which is a British war plant, revolves around an American cabaret singer who becomes a defense worker for the sole purpose of furthering her own career. As is usual, the story ends with the heroine's realization that war is a serious business and that it should not be used as a means of gaining one's selfish ends. Brenda Joyce, as the heroine, sings and performs well. Elsa Lanchester, as a British show-girl, handles her comedy role effectively. The dialogue is interspersed with patriotic messages and words of caution to defense workers about the importance of safety measures. There is one rousing song sung by Gertrude Neisen, who plays as a visiting American entertainer:—

When New York does not recognize her singing talents, Brenda Joyce, an entertainer, goes to London. There, Arthur Margetson, her manager and suitor, secures a part for her in a contemplated show. Meanwhile she earned her living by singing in a Picadilly night-club. The show's producer, however, changes his plans and decides to stage a show about aircraft factory workers. He planned to hold talent tryouts at different war plants, and to select as the featured players for his show the most talented workers.

When Elsa Lanchester, an English show-girl, informs her that she was leaving the stage for a job in a defense plant, Brenda decides to do the same; she planned to get herself "discovered" during the talent tryouts. Because she was an American, Brenda's fellow-workers regarded her highly for helping in the British war effort. Richard Fraser, an RAF flier, who was supervisor of the factory, had fallen in love with Brenda when he met her at the Picadilly night-club. He continues to pursue her, but during factory hours his manner was brusque and business-like. Brenda eventually falls in love with him. Brenda gets her chance to appear on the London stage when she wins the talent tryout in her factory, but her joy is short-lived when the factory workers and Fraser ostracize her after discovering that her patriotic gesture was guided by self-interest. Their contempt brings her to her senses and, to vindicate herself, she accepts the blame for a factory accident in which Fraser had been unintentionally at fault. She resigns her job, and returns to her singing at the night-club. Learning that he had been responsible for the accident, Fraser clears Brenda's name and follows her to London. He brings her back to the plant where she resumes her job for the duration, promising to marry him after the war.

Frank Gill, Jr., wrote the screen play, Albert J. Cohen produced it, and Joseph Stanley directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"It's a Great Life" with Arthur Lake, Penny Singleton and Hugh Herbert

(Columbia, May 27; time, 68 min.)

The ardent followers of the "Blondie" series may find this slapstick comedy entertaining; others will probably be bored. As in the previous "Blondie" pictures, Arthur Lake, because of his stupidity, incurs the wrath of his employer and complicates matters at home, but everything ends up in a manner that is satisfactory to all. This time the "Bumsteads'" troubles begin when Lake unwittingly buys a horse instead of a house. It is a hodge-podge of ridiculous situations, some amusing, with a horse, a dog, and Hugh Herbert contributing to the confusion. The juvenile element will find much to laugh at:—

In a telephone conversation with Jonathan Hale, his employer, Arthur Lake misunderstands his instructions, which were to buy a house, and instead goes to the address that Hale had given him and purchases a horse. Furious, Hale orders him to get rid of the animal. Lake takes the horse home and, much to the consternation of Penny Singleton, his wife, improvises a stable in the backyard. On the following morning, the horse follows Lake when he leaves for work. Lake arrives at the office just as Hale is closing a deal with Hugh Herbert, an eccentric millionaire, who loved horses and refused to discuss business when he saw one. The horse follows Lake into the office, disrupting the conference. Alan Dinehart, Hale's unscrupulous business rival, makes an unexpected appearance and seeks Herbert's favor by seeming interested in the horse. Herbert leaves the office, inviting the horse's owner, whoever he was, to a fox-hunt at his estate on the following morning. Discharged by Hale, Lake returns home gloomily, only to learn that Penny had sold the horse to Dinehart. Meanwhile Hale, realizing that the horse was the means of his meeting Herbert again, pays a friendly visit to Lake and is dismayed to learn that Dinehart was one step ahead of him. Just then the horse is heard whinnying outside the house; he had wandered back home. Dinehart arrives to claim the animal, but Penny solves the situation by tearing up the check he had given her in payment, thus voiding the sale. At the fox-hunt on the following day, Lake unwittingly retrieves the fox. Herbert is so impressed with his horsemanship that he agrees, as a favor to Lake, to close the deal with Hale.

Connie Lee and Karen DeWolf wrote the screen play, and Frank Strayer produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Redhead from Manhattan" with Lupe Velez and Michael Duane

(Columbia, May 6; time, 59 min.)

This program comedy with music has many silly moments, but on the whole it should amuse indiscriminating audiences. The story is based on the mistaken identity theme, with Lupe Velez cast in a dual role. Whatever interest one has in the picture is owed to the good performance of Miss Velez; portraying identical cousins, one a sedate American musical star, and the other a dynamic foreign theatrical star, she makes each character a distinct personality. There are a number of laugh-provoking situations, and the action is breezy. Miss Velez is on the screen throughout, which is a good thing, for she is the main attraction:—

Torpedoed on a ship, Rita (Lupe Velez), a foreign theatrical star, and Jimmy (Michael Duane), an American musician, drift ashore on the coast of the United States. On the beach they find some Nazi-cached money. Beach patrolmen mistake them for spies, and they are forced to flee. Narrowly escaping from the law, they hitch-hike to New York where the two go their separate ways in order to avert suspicion. Rita visits her cousin Elaine (also played by Miss Velez), star in a Broadway musical show, who was secretly married to Paul (Lewis Wilson). Elaine was expecting a baby, and Mike Glendon (Tim Ryan), her manager, was brooding over the fact that the show would close down if she left. Rita's close resemblance to Elaine astounds Mike, and an agreement is reached whereby Rita will impersonate Elaine while the latter has her baby. Having promised to keep the arrangement a secret, Rita is compelled to ignore Jimmy when he secures a job playing in the theatre orchestra. Complications set in for Rita when Chick Andrews (Gerald Mohr), a gangster, who believed that Rita was Elaine and did not know that Elaine was married, demands that she declare her love for him. Rita tells him that she loves Jimmy. Chick and Jimmy have a fight, with Jimmy maintaining that Rita is Elaine and that he did not know her. They agree to go to Elaine's apartment to settle matters. Meanwhile Elaine had returned home, followed soon after by her husband. After much confusion in which Paul mistakes Rita for Elaine, and Jimmy mistakes Elaine for Rita, Elaine's manager comes to the rescue and explains everything.

Joseph Hoffman wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Lew Landers directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Boy from Stalingrad" with Bobby Samartzich

(Columbia, May 20; time, 68 min.)

If one is willing to put himself in the mood, this fanciful war melodrama may serve as an acceptable supporting feature. The highly implausible action revolves around a band of six Russian youngsters, ranging from five to ten years of age, whose guerilla tactics hamper a detachment of Nazi soldiers, preventing them from continuing their drive on Stalingrad. The story has considerable heart interest and a good deal of suspense, but it is more to the taste of juveniles than of adults. The youngsters are appealing, and their performances are good:—

Nadya (Mary Lou Harrington), Kolya (Bobby Samartzich), Grisha (Conrad Binyon), Pavel (Scotty Beckett), and Yura (Donald Mayo), five Russian youngsters, whose parents had met death at the hands of the Nazis, find themselves caught between the city of Stalingrad and the advancing German army. They rescue Tommy (Steven Muller), an English lad, whose father, an engineer, had been ruthlessly executed. Hiding out in the cellar of a demolished building, the six band together and become guerillas. Their tactics harry a detachment of Nazi soldiers nearby, and the Germans hesitate to approach the village, fearing

a trap. A Nazi Major (John E. Wengraf) finally captures Grisha and orders him to lead the way to the guerilla headquarters. Grisha leads the Major into a trap and, aided by his friends, takes him prisoner. The children debate as to whether or not the Major should be executed with all agreeing that the cause would be served better if he were turned over to the Russian Army authorities. Before they can deliver their prisoner, however, a Nazi patrol rescues the Major and kills Grisha. The other youngsters escape. The Nazis send over a squadron of bombing planes to clear the shattered village of the young guerillas, and Nadya and Yura are killed during the bombardment. Undaunted, Tommy enters the Nazi camp and asks to be taken to the Major. As the Major questions him, Tommy fearlessly pulls the pin on a grenade in his coat pocket, killing himself along with the Major and his guards. Kolya and Pavel determine to continue their fight against the invaders.

Ferdinand Reyer wrote the screen play, Gilbert Clark produced it, and Sidney Salkow directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Two Tickets to London" with Michele Morgan and Alan Curtis

(Universal, June 18; time, 77 min.)

Good direction and acting lift this melodrama above average program fare; it has enough suspense and excitement to satisfy most audiences, even though the action occasionally drags. The story revolves around an American seaman, who, charged with betraying his convoy to the enemy, eludes the police in an effort to clear himself. One's interest is held fairly well, for the evidence against him is not made known until towards the finish, but the ending is weak; the manner in which he clears himself is too convenient. Although it is a war melodrama, there is practically no war scenes. Dooley Wilson, of "Casablanca" fame, is cast as an accordionist and singer in a London pub. There is considerable romantic interest:—

When the British Merchant Ship "Lucky Star" is torpedoed, Alan Curtis, its First Mate and one of the survivors, is accused of having signalled a U-Boat to attack the ship. En route by train to London to face charges, Curtis is handcuffed to a detective. A German air attack wrecks the train, killing the detective. Curtis frees himself, but is left with the handcuffs locked to one wrist. To make good his escape, Curtis carries the unconscious form of Michele Morgan from the wreckage, and takes her with him. He finds refuge in a deserted hut near the wreck. When Michele regains consciousness, she believes him to be a criminal, but Curtis maintains that he is innocent and that he must get to London to clear himself. Wary at first, Michele's attitude towards him changes and she offers to help him. Meanwhile the police under the direction of C. Aubrey Smith, head Admiralty detective, close in on their trail. Curtis insists that she go on alone, but Michele, desperately in love with him, refuses. After many narrow escapes from the police, the two reach London and go to the home of Mary Gordon and Oscar O'Shea, an elderly couple, who were taking care of Torquin Oliver, Michele's young son; Michele's husband, an English flyer, had been killed in action. While Curtis helps put the youngster to bed, Michele receives word that her brother had lost his life when the "Lucky Star" sank. Embittered, she blames Curtis and orders him to leave. He goes into hiding at a lodging house owned by Barry Fitzgerald, an old friend. Michele informs Aubrey of Curtis' whereabouts, bringing about his arrest. At the hearing, Curtis examines a witness who accused him of the crime and, by a dramatic reenactment of his movements on the ship, clears himself and pins the crime on his accuser. Through Aubrey's efforts, Michele and Curtis are brought together before he sails on another hazardous journey.

Tom Reed wrote the screen play, and Edwin L. Marin produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

BOX OFFICE PERFORMANCES

(The previous box-office performances were printed in the issues of January 9 and January 16, 1943.)

Columbia

"Junior Army": Fair-Poor.
 "Underground Agent": Fair.
 "A Night to Remember": Good-Fair.
 "Commandos Strike at Dawn": Very Good-Good.
 "City Without Men": Fair.
 "One Dangerous Night": Fair.
 "Power of the Press": Fair.
 "Reveille With Beverly": Good-Fair.
 "No Place For A Lady": Fair.
 "Something To Shout About": Good-Fair.
 "After Midnight With Boston Blackie": Fair.
 "Let's Have Fun": Poor.
 "The Desperadoes": Good-Fair.
 "Murder In Times Square": Fair.
 "She Has What It Takes": Fair-Poor.

Fifteen pictures, excluding five westerns, have been checked with the following results:

Very Good-Good, 1; Good-Fair, 4; Fair, 7; Fair-Poor, 2; Poor, 1.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

"Whistling In Dixie": Good-Fair.
 "Journey For Margaret": Good-Fair.
 "Reunion In France": Good-Fair.
 "Stand By For Action": Good.
 "Dr. Gillespie's New Assistant": Fair.
 "Andy Hardy's Double Life": Good-Fair.
 "Northwest Rangers": Fair.
 "Keeper of the Flame": Good.
 "Three Hearts for Julia": Good-Fair.
 "Tennessee Johnson": Good-Fair.
 "Cabin In the Sky": Good.
 "A Stranger in Town": Good-Fair.
 "Slightly Dangerous": Good.
 "Assignment in Brittany": Good-Fair.
 "Air Raid Wardens": Fair.

Fifteen pictures have been checked with the following results:

Good, 4; Good-Fair, 8; Fair, 3.

Paramount

"Star Spangled Rhythm": Excellent-Very Good.
 "Lucky Jordan": Very Good.
 "Lady Bodyguard": Fair.
 "Happy Go Lucky": Good.
 "Night Plane from Chungking": Fair.
 "Henry Aldrich Gets Glamour": Good-Fair.

Six pictures have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 2.

RKO

"They Got Me Covered": Good-Fair.
 "Hitler's Children": Good.
 "Journey Into Fear": Fair-Poor.
 "Saludos Amigos": Fair.
 "Two Weeks to Live": Poor.
 "Cinderella Swings It": Poor.
 "Pride of the Yankees": Excellent-Very Good.
 "Tarzan Triumphs": Fair.
 "Forever and a Day": Fair.
 "Flight for Freedom": Fair.
 "Ladies' Day": Fair-Poor.
 "This Land is Mine": Good-Fair.
 "I Walked with a Zombie": Fair.
 "The Falcon Strikes Back": Fair.

Fourteen pictures, excluding two westerns, have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 6; Fair-Poor, 2; Poor, 2.

Twentieth Century-Fox

"Life Begins at Eight Thirty": Fair.
 "China Girl": Fair.
 "We Are the Marines": Fair.
 "Over My Dead Body": Fair.
 "Time to Kill": Fair.
 "The Immortal Sergeant": Good.
 "Chetniks": Fair.
 "The Meanest Man in the World": Good-Fair.
 "Margin for Error": Fair.
 "The Young Mr. Pitt": Poor.
 "Dixie Dugan": Fair-Poor.
 "Quiet Please, Murder": Fair.
 "Hello, Frisco, Hello": Excellent-Very Good.
 "He Hired the Boss": Fair-Poor.
 "The Moon Is Down": Fair.
 "Desert Victory": Fair.
 "My Friend Flicka": Good-Fair.
 "Tonight We Raid Calais": Fair.
 "They Came To Blow Up America": Fair.
 "Crash Dive": Excellent-Very Good.

Twenty pictures have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 2; Good, 1; Good-Fair, 2; Fair, 12; Fair-Poor, 2; Poor, 1.

United Artists

"Jacare": Fair-Poor.
 "The McGuerins From Brooklyn": Fair-Poor.
 "The Crystal Ball": Fair-Poor.
 "Calaboose": Poor.
 "Young and Willing": Fair-Poor.
 "In Which We Serve": Good-Fair.
 "Hangmen Also Die": Fair.
 "Lady of Burlesque": Very Good-Good.
 "Taxi, Mister": Fair.
 "Buckskin Frontier": Fair.
 "The Powers Girl": Fair.

Eleven pictures, excluding three westerns, have been checked with the following results:

Very Good, 1; Good-Fair, 1; Fair, 5; Fair-Poor, 3; Poor, 1.

Universal

"Eyes of the Underworld": Fair-Poor.
 "Shadow of a Doubt": Good-Fair.
 "How's About It": Fair.
 "Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon": Fair.
 "Hi Buddy": Fair.
 "Hi Ya Chum": Fair.
 "Frankenstein Meets The Wolfman": Good-Fair.
 "It Ain't Hay": Good-Fair.
 "He's My Guy": Good-Fair.
 "Keep 'Em Slugging": Fair.
 "It Comes Up Love": Fair.
 "Rhythm of the Islands": Fair.
 "Sherlock Holmes In Washington": Fair.
 "Next of Kin": Fair.
 "Good Morning Judge": Fair.
 "Amazing Mrs. Holliday": Good-Fair.
 "White Savage": Good.

Seventeen pictures, excluding two westerns, have been checked with the following results:

Good, 1; Good-Fair, 4; Fair, 11; Fair-Poor, 1.

Warner Bros.

"Flying Fortress": Fair.
 "Gorilla Man": Fair-Poor.
 "Casablanca": Excellent-Very Good.
 "Truck Busters": Fair-Poor.
 "The Hard Way": Fair.
 "The Mysterious Doctor": Fair.
 "Air Force": Very Good.
 "Edge of Darkness": Good.

Eight pictures have been checked with the following results:

Excellent-Very Good, 1; Very Good, 1; Good, 1; Fair, 3; Fair-Poor, 2.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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HERE AND THERE

ACCORDING TO *Film Daily*, Tom C. Clark, chief of the Department of Justice's Anti-trust division, has announced that he will personally handle the New York suit against the major companies when the three year trial period of the Consent Decree expires in November.

Clark is credited with saying that he intends to gather material on the case during the summer months, at which time he expects to visit most of the anti-trust division's regional offices, and hopes to confer with exhibitors at all of them. Clark intends to confer also with the producers and distributors both in Hollywood and in New York.

Stating that the attitude of his Department will be based strictly on the evidence on hand, Clark mentioned that he would welcome the submission of evidence by all interested parties.

Clark revealed that the Crescent Amusement Case will definitely reach the U. S. Supreme Court. Even if the defendants do not press their appeal, his department will, because it is dissatisfied with some of the Crescent decree's provisions, namely, stock ownership and combination buying.

Since taking over the duties of Thurman Arnold, his predecessor, Clark has proved himself to be in favor of swift, hard-hitting law enforcement. His record thus far indicates that the majors will not have an easy time of it come November.

The Government's victory in the Crescent Case drove the first wedge into the monopolies that exist in the industry. The New York suit may be the means by which these monopolies will be uprooted and destroyed. In view of the fact that Clark seems more willing to lend an ear to the exhibitors' viewpoint than was Thurman Arnold during the original proceedings, the exhibitors should help the drive by submitting to Clark, either through their organizations, or personally, all available evidence of the gross inequities that exist under the present selling system.

* * *

METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER has announced that it will produce four short subjects dramatizing the four freedoms that President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill laid down in their Atlantic Charter many months ago.

This announcement is particularly gratifying to this paper, for, in our September 12, 1942 issue, we advocated that the industry undertake such a project. We stated that "our unimaginative civilian is hazy about what these four freedoms are, and what they stand for. . . . That is where we, of the motion picture industry, come in. Using the artistry we have at our command, we must dramatize the facts through nar-

ration and depiction on the screen. Our unimaginative civilian will then learn not only what the four freedoms are, but what they mean."

MGM is to be congratulated for having chosen to dramatize the four freedoms. Properly produced, these four short subjects should do much to bring to the average man a better understanding of what he is fighting for.

* * *

IN A RECENT ISSUE, *Film Daily* reported some interesting statistics regarding the number of feature attractions offered at the *Radio City Music Hall* during the first six months of any year in its ten year history.

From January 1 of this year to June 25, the *Music Hall* has shown but five features, namely, "Random Harvest," "They Got Me Covered," "Keeper of the Flame," "Flight for Freedom" and "The More the Merrier." Considering the fact that "Random Harvest" opened on December 24, 1942, the *Music Hall* completed a full six month period with no more than five features.

Following is the *Music Hall's* record for the first six months in previous years: 1934, twenty-one features; 1935, nineteen features; 1936, fifteen features; 1937, thirteen features; 1938, twelve features; 1939, fourteen features; 1940, twelve features; 1941, eleven features; and 1942, eight features.

In citing these figures, *Film Daily* states that they are a "barometer of the virtually progressive quality of top screen attractions."

HARRISON'S REPORTS, however, is inclined to feel that the extended runs enjoyed by the films featured at the *Music Hall* are not due so much to the "progressive quality of top screen attractions," as they are to the fact that war-time conditions have created an entertainment-hungry public, whose spending money is plentiful.

Not to be discounted, however, in judging the *Music Hall's* low feature requirements, is the smart showmanship of Gus S. Eysell, under whose guidance the *Music Hall* has thrived; even to the staid New Yorker, a visit to the *Music Hall* is still a thrill.

* * *

WHILE ON THE SUBJECT of statistics, here are some more interesting figures, which, according to the *Motion Picture Daily*, are among the conclusions reported by Dr. Leo Handel, market researcher for MGM, who is on an assignment to determine the sources most responsible for theatre patronage by persons who attend theatres for the purpose of seeing a specific picture.

According to Dr. Handel's report, each of the
(Continued on last page)

"Dixie" with Bing Crosby and Dorothy Lamour

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 88 min.)

Very entertaining, with good box-office possibilities because of the popularity of the players. Although it is based on the life of Daniel Emmett, creator of the minstrel show and author of the song "Dixie," it does not offer much in the way of a story. But it should go over well with the masses, for it has bright comedy, romance, and music, as well as the always pleasant singing of Bing Crosby. Produced on a lavish scale, the sets and brilliant costumes are enhanced by Technicolor photography, but the color work is not very flattering to the players; their faces are given a coppery tone. The action takes place in 1859:—

Fortified with \$500 in his pocket, and a promise that he will be permitted to marry Jean Mason (Marjorie Reynolds) if he doubles his money in six months, Dan Emmett leaves Mt. Vernon, Ohio, to seek fame and fortune as an actor and composer. On a river boat, Dan loses his money to Mr. Bones (Billy de Wolf), an actor and crooked gambler, with whom he catches up again in New Orleans. Bones pacifies Dan by taking him to his boarding house, run by Millie Cook (Dorothy Lamour), who immediately works her charms on Dan. With Mr. Whitlock (Lynne Overman) and Mr. Pelham (Eddie Foy, Jr.), Dan and Bones form a minstrel quartet that proves a hit at the Maxwell theatre. But the theatre burns down, leaving them unemployed. While it is being rebuilt, Dan returns home to inform Jean that he intends to marry Millie. He finds Jean crippled from paralysis. They are married and go to New York, where Dan plans to resume his career. Mr. Cook (Raymond Walburn), Millie's father, comes to New York to persuade Dan to return to the minstrels. Mr. Cook's chatter reveals to Jean the romance between Dan and Millie. To find out the true state of affairs, Jean persuades Dan to return. Millie, prepared to hate the girl who had married Dan, becomes sympathetic and understanding when she sees Jean. Dan organizes a new and larger minstrel show. In a game of cards, he bests the manager of the French Opera House, and wins a contract to appear there. On opening night, Jean, believing that Dan and Millie still loved one another, sends a note to Dan's dressing room, telling him that she was leaving. Millie discovers the cause of Jean's unhappiness and burns the note, but the smouldering paper sets a fire backstage. To cover up the confusion, Dan has the whole troupe join him in the singing of "Dixie." The song makes him famous. To ease Jean's feelings, Millie announces her engagement to Mr. Bones.

Karl Tunberg and Darrell Ware wrote the screen play, Paul Jones produced it, and A. Edward Sutherland directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Henry Aldrich Swings It" with Jimmy Lydon

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 64 min.)

This program comedy should prove amusing to the followers of this series, as well as to the family trade. Despite the silliness of the plot, the action moves at a pretty good pace and some of the situations provoke hearty laughter. As in all the other "Henry Aldrich" pictures, Jimmy Lydon, as "Henry," gets into many predicaments from which he does not extricate himself until the very end. There are a few musical numbers of the popular variety:—

Infatuated with Marian Hall, his high school's new and pretty music teacher, Jimmy Lydon takes a sudden interest in music and asks John Litel, his father, to buy him a violin. Litel refuses, but he changes his mind when Marian visits him. Olive Blakeney, Litel's wife, suspects that Litel, too, had been entranced by Marian. Fritz Feld, a famous violinist, comes to town for a concert, and is accompanied by the school's orchestra. Steve Geray and Frank McHugh, two crooks, had followed Feld, planning to steal his Stradivarius violin. After the concert, Jimmy exchanges violins

with Feld by mistake, and the crooks unwittingly steal his worthless violin. Jimmy organizes a "swing" band and secures an engagement at a shady roadhouse. The place is raided and Jimmy, rushing to escape, leaves the Stradivarius behind. By this time Feld had discovered his loss. Charles Arnt, an insurance detective, starts an investigation. He traces the violin to Jimmy, and summons both the youngster and his father for questioning. Believing that Arnt was referring to his escape from the roadhouse, Jimmy answers evasively, casting suspicion both on his father and himself. Jimmy retrieves the violin and is horrified to discover the name Stradivarius inside it. He anonymously informs Feld that he will get his violin back if he attends the graduation exercises. Meanwhile the school principal learns of Jimmy's escapade and, blaming Marian, discharges her. Litel defends Marian, and his wife misinterprets his motive. She packs up and leaves him, unaware that Jimmy had hidden the Stradivarius in her trunk. All ends well at the graduation exercises when Jimmy's mother returns the violin to Feld; the two crooks are caught attempting to steal the violin again; Marian is reinstated, and Jimmy's parents are reconciled.

Val Burton and Muriel Roy Bolton wrote the screen play, Walter MacEwen produced it, and Hugh Bennett directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Submarine Alert" with Richard Arlen and Wendy Barrie

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 67 min.)

A routine program spy melodrama. Insofar as the story is concerned, it differs little from countless other pictures based on a similar theme; yet the action fans may overlook that fact since the story moves at a pretty good pace and holds one in suspense. The action, which is serial-like, revolves around a friendly alien, a radio technician, who unwittingly becomes involved with Axis spies, but eventually helps the F.B.I. to round them up. Although there is plenty of excitement, the action is lacking surprise twists. Moreover, many of the situations are old-fashioned:—

By means of a stolen compact, powerful radio transmitter, Nils Asther and Marc Lawrence, Axis agents, operating on the Pacific Coast, radio ship movements to Japanese submarines. The F.B.I., headed by Roger Pryor, is unsuccessful in its attempts to locate the transmitter. Realizing that the spies will require the services of a skilled radio engineer to keep the transmitter in order, Pryor arranges for a number of top radio men to be discharged from their jobs, hoping that the spies will approach one of them. Richard Arlen, one of the discharged radio men, is contacted by Asther. By informing him that he had invented a new type therapeutic machine that employed radio principles, Asther tricks Arlen into agreeing to make certain parts for him. Meanwhile Wendy Barrie, an F.B.I. operative, makes Arlen's acquaintance so as to keep watch on his movements. Arlen eventually learns of Wendy's identity and realizes that he had unwittingly been helping the spies. Determining to clear himself, Arlen visits the spies' hideout and demands that they accept him as a member. Asther tricks him into revealing his true purpose. After an exciting fight and chase, Arlen escapes and meets Wendy on the highway, searching for the hideout. Together they head for Pryor's office to warn him against allowing ships to sail that night; Arlen had learned of the spies' plan to sink the convoy. But before they can reach Pryor, Arlen and Wendy are intercepted by the spies and brought back to the hideout where they are placed in a steam room to suffocate. Using numerous gadgets that he had in his pockets, Arlen rigs up an ingenious transmitter and succeeds in contacting the F.B.I. The spies are rounded up and the convoy is saved.

Maxwell Shane wrote the screen play, William Pine and William Thomas produced it, and Frank MacDonald directed it. The cast includes John Miljan, Abner Biberman, Patsy Nash, Ralph Sanford, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"So Proudly We Hail"
with Claudette Colbert, Veronica Lake
and Paulette Goddard

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 124 min.)

Very good! This war drama is a thoroughly engrossing and stirring dramatization of the courageous work done by the American Red Cross Nurses at Bataan and Corregidor during the struggle of the American and Philippine troops to hold off the overwhelming Japanese hordes. Word-of-mouth advertising, and the popularity of the stars, assures its success at the box-office. Unlike a good many war dramas, this one has an authentic and realistic flavor; it is a fitting tribute to a valiant group of women. There are a few situations here and there that are tensely exciting, others that are tender, touching, and romantic, and still others that are comical. The direction is fine and the performances are outstanding. Sonny Tufts, a promising newcomer, has a likeable personality; he steals every scene in which he appears. A secondary romance between Paulette Goddard and Tufts is appealing.

The story, which is told in flashback, opens up with a group of Army Nurses, headed by Claudette Colbert, aboard a transport bound for Hawaii. En route, they learn of the Pearl Harbor attack. Their ship changes its course and joins a convoy bound for the Philippines. One of the ships in the convoy is torpedoed, and among the survivors taken aboard Claudette's ship are Veronica Lake, a sullen nurse, and Lieut. George Reeves, with whom Claudette eventually falls in love. The other nurses violently dislike Veronica, but, when they learn that she was brooding over the death of her fiancé at Pearl Harbor, their attitude toward her changes. The convoy reaches Bataan after the fall of Manila, and the nurses are sent to Limay to care for the wounded. The rapid approach of the Japs forces the evacuation of Limay, and an advance squad of Jap soldiers trap the nurses in a building before they can escape. Determined to save the others, Veronica, with a grenade hidden in her bosom, walks out to lure the Japs to her, blowing them and herself to bits. Under incessant fire, the nurses and men eventually reach Corregidor where they live under constant bombardment. Reeves, who had recovered from serious wounds, is ordered to leave for Mindanao in search of badly needed quinine. Before he leaves, he and Claudette are married. A few days later, the nurses are ordered to leave for Australia. Claudette refuses to go, intending to wait for Reeves' return. When her superior informs her that Reeves is officially considered lost, hysteria overcomes Claudette. A bursting bomb nearby shocks and puts her into a coma. On a ship bound for home, Janet revives when a doctor produces a letter from Reeves and reads it to her.

Allan Scott wrote the screen play, and Mark Sandrich produced and directed it. The cast includes Walter Abel, Barbara Britton, Ted Hecht, James Bell, Jan Wiley, Mary Treen and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Alaska Highway" with Richard Arlen
and Jean Parker

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 68 min.)

A minor melodrama, based on a routine plot; it is best suited for the lower half of a double bill in small town and neighborhood theatres. Little imagination has been put into the treatment, and much of the action is slowed down by too much dialogue. The construction of the Alaska Highway leading through the Canadian wilds to Alaska forms a topical background, and some interesting stock shots about this work have been included, but it is not enough to hold one's interest, or to overcome the triteness of the plot:—

Harry Shannon returns from Washington to his construction company with a Majority in the Army Engineers Corps and an assignment to help build the Alaska Highway. The

news is greeted enthusiastically by Billy Henry, the younger of Shannon's two sons, but Richard Arlen, the elder, decides that he would rather fight the Japs with bullets than with bulldozers. Shannon is disappointed; he counted on Arlen to help him get the road finished on schedule. Edward Earle, a road engineer, and Jean Parker, his daughter, make preparations to accompany the construction crew to Alaska. Ann, who had fallen in love with Arlen although Henry loved her, uses all her charm to get Arlen to change his mind. She succeeds. Work commences on the highway and, because of the many hazards the men have to overcome, they fall behind schedule. Impeding the progress still further is the jealousy and hatred Henry bears for Arlen because of Jean's love for him. Henry offers his resignation but Shannon is unwilling to accept it. When Jean's father informs her of what is going on between both brothers, she deliberately ignores Arlen for Henry in an effort to right things. Angered, Arlen decides to leave. On the day of his departure a landslide imperils the life of Henry, and Arlen goes to his rescue. When Henry notices the concern that Jean had shown for Arlen's safety, he sees clearly for the first time whom she loves. The brothers forget their differences and, together, help finish the road in record time.

Maxwel Shane wrote the screen play, William Pine and William Thomas produced it, and Frank MacDonald directed it. The cast includes Ralph Sanford, Joe Sawyer and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Get Going" with Grace McDonald,
Robert Paige, and Vera Vague

(Universal, June 25; time, 57 min.)

A moderately entertaining program comedy with music. Although the story is silly, exhibitors who cater to audiences that are not too exacting in their demands may fare well with this picture, for it has breezy action and a number of comical situations. The story is set against the background of war-time Washington with its overcrowded living conditions and the inability of girls to obtain dates because they outnumber the men eight to one. Toward the end there is a rough and tumble fight in a cabaret that is highly slapstick and very amusing:—

Exasperated by the jealous antics of Frank Faylen, her boy-friend, Grace McDonald leaves their small Vermont town and goes to Washington to seek a career. She finds a place to sleep by sharing a room with Vera Vague, Lois Collier and Maureen Cannon, who worked as stenographers in a governmental agency. Grace, too, finds employment at the agency, where she meets Robert Paige, assistant personnel director. The girls inform Grace that he is a woman-hater. When Grace learns that one of Paige's duties was to investigate suspicious movements on the part of employees, she deliberately leads Paige to suspect her of espionage. In due time Paige sets out to investigate her, and a series of gay evenings in night-clubs follows. Meanwhile Faylen, whose jealous interest in Grace took the form of a vicious punch to the jaw of any man who paid attention to her, hires Walter Catlett, a private detective, to find her. Faylen comes to Washington and pleads with Grace to return home with him. She refuses. Milburn Stone, Paige's superior, learns of Grace's ruse. Paige, angered by his own guilelessness, determines to teach her a lesson. He arranges for her "arrest" as a spy suspect and, after grilling her, sends her home thoroughly chastised. Grace goes to the Dutch Treat Club where she meets Faylen and her three roommates. By accident, she discovers that the club is actually a headquarters for a spy ring. Grace screams the alarm and manages to telephone Paige. A fight ensues with Faylen and the girls subduing the spies by the time Paige and the police arrive. Grace and Paige are reunited, and Vera appropriates Faylen.

Warren Wilson wrote the screen play, William Cowan produced it, and Jean Yarbrough directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

following sources draws a percentage of this type of audience: Trailers, 16.4 per cent; advance newspaper advertising, 10.6 per cent; newspaper reviews and articles, 16 per cent; newspaper film page seen on the day of attendance, 5 per cent; theatre front, 3.8 per cent; radio advertising, 3.1 per cent; fan magazine advertisements, 2.5 per cent; posters and billboards, 1.5 per cent; national magazine advertisements 1.4 per cent; advertisements in or on other theatres, 0.6 per cent; and other sources 2.8 per cent. "Hearsay," or word-of-mouth advertising, draws 36 per cent of this type of audience. All this adds up to 99.8 per cent. There is no indication of what happened to the 0.2 per cent lacking.

Without going into the question of whether or not these figures are accurate, but assuming that they are based on careful research work, they seem to prove that a good percentage of the motion picture public is not influenced by glowing advertisements and high-powered publicity. These people, constituting a select group, whose attendance spells the difference between an average success and an outstanding one, come to the theatre only if their friends speak kindly of the picture playing. It would seem, therefore, that we must deliver the goods to our regular patrons so that they in turn will influence their discriminating friends.

All in all, Dr. Handel's survey bears out what the industry has known since its infancy—that the best kind of advertising comes out of the mouths of those who, having paid an admission price to be entertained, are satisfied by what they receive. But when the patron is dissatisfied, he can have an effect on a picture that no amount of advertising can offset.

* * *

THE MUCH AWAITED "For Whom the Bell Tolls" will have its world premiere at the New York Rivoli on July 14.

The proceeds of the premiere will be turned over to the National War Fund, which is a unified war relief fund-raising organization, and will be divided among such groups as the U.S.O., the British War Relief Society, United China Relief, Greek War Relief, United Seamen's Service and many other similar organizations.

Paramount is to be commended for donating its world premiere receipts to so worthy a cause. Other companies, too, have handled the world premiers of their important pictures in like fashion, and the continuance of such a policy gains for the industry inestimable good will.

* * *

UNDER THE TITLE "Hand-outs Are Not Enough," M. A. Rosenberg, president of Allied States Association, has sent out the following release:

"The idea is being propagated in various quarters that the problem of excessive film rentals can be solved by 'granting relief' in the most desperate situations, especially where exhibitors have suffered a loss of patronage due to population shifts.

"Those who are familiar with the exhibitor point of view in different parts of the country realize that however welcome adjustments in isolated cases may be, the policy is a mere palliative and will not meet the exhibitors' demand for a remedy for the unsound basic conditions now prevailing.

"The real complaint of the exhibitors is that the major distributors, by their sales policies and gadget selling—especially the increasing number of high

percentage pictures—are diverting into their own pockets an undue proportion of the box-office receipts in all situations, including those that have gained as well as those that have suffered from war time conditions.

"By their policies the distributors have forced themselves into partnership with the exhibitors, but it is a partnership in success, not in adversity. The distributors are willing to share the receipts but not the expense. They have exercised the power inherent in their control of the product, to demand and take an ever-increasing proportion of the box-office. Exhibitors find themselves reduced from independent business men to mere commission agents of the distributors, operating their theatres on an ever narrowing percentage of the receipts.

"Exhibitor organizations and exhibitor leaders in all parts of the country are crying out against the injustices of the situation. Even the most aggressive offenders of the existing order no longer contend that abuses do not exist. In the past they have attempted to soothe our aches with a hush, a balm, or a lullaby. This time they seek to quiet the tumult by promising a helping hand to those drowning without any attempt to correct the basic evil—unsound sales policies—resulting in excessive film rentals.

"Exhibitors will never be satisfied with a sales policy that merely keeps them breathing, while the distributors enjoy full and overflowing abundance. No exhibitor whose gross business shows an increase while his net income shows little or no profit, will ever be happy, when the condition is the result of percentage playing and other burdensome terms and conditions imposed by the distributors.

"The situation is aggravated and the resentment of the exhibitors is increased when the trade press shows the ever mounting profits of the distributors over and above increased income and excess profit taxes.

"Obviously the solution is not to make mendicants of the exhibitors by requiring them to apply to the exchange—hat in hand—for hand-outs. It is wrong—and the distributors know it is wrong—to persist in policies and practices which result in such an unequal division of the profits of the business. All thinking men in this or any other business must realize that such an unsound and unjust condition can not continue indefinitely.

"The distributors should stop thinking in terms of palliatives. They should adjust their selling policies so as to keep their own profits within reasonable bounds. They should stop unreasonable and unfair discrimination between exhibitors in the matter of terms and prices. These reforms would have the effect automatically to cure the condition that is giving rise to so much complaint, and it would save a good deal of grief in the days to come."

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Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, JULY 3, 1943

No. 27

HERE AND THERE

GRADWELL SEARS, UNITED ARTISTS' vice-president in charge of domestic distribution, has vehemently taken exception to the remarks of Pete J. Wood, secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, relative to United Artists' selling policy on "Stage Door Canteen."

Wood, in a recent bulletin, announced that reports "trickling" into his office "indicated that United Artists is using this picture to force exhibitors to buy not only some of their other features but also the Hopalong Cassidys." He admitted that the producer is foregoing a large share of his profits, which will be given to the U.S.O., but, he continued, "the exhibitor in paying 50% on preferred playing time can also be considered as a substantial donor, and he, we feel certain, would not object to making this donation if he were not forced to buy other pictures of doubtful merit in order to obtain 'Stage Door Canteen.'"

"We assume," said Wood, "that United Artists is receiving a profitable percentage for distributing the picture, but they could afford to do it for nothing if they are going to use it to 'club' exhibitors into buying some of the other inferior product they are distributing." Wood concluded by urging exhibitors to report to his office all instances where United Artists refuse to sell "Stage Door Canteen" unless other pictures are bought.

In a telegram to Wood denying the allegations, Grad Sears stated that the practice Wood complained of is contrary to the established policy of United Artists. "I personally would appreciate definite information on specific instances where this alleged practice has been employed," said Sears.

Pointing out that United Artists is "presently releasing and is about to release pictures of sufficient merit and quality to require no assistance of any kind whatsoever from any other picture," Sears informed Wood that "it is a known and generally conceded policy of United Artists for the past twenty-five years that no exhibitor need buy the pictures of any one producer to acquire the pictures of any other producer and until such time as specific and concrete information is provided me of exceptions to this announced policy I will have to assume that your allegations are incorrect and unfounded."

HARRISON'S REPORTS does not know whether or not Pete Wood is in a position to furnish Grad Sears with "specific and concrete" information regarding the attempts of salesmen to force other pictures on an exhibitor; most always, the offending salesman is careful and shrewd enough to handle the matter in a way that, should any controversy arise, it is his word against the word of the exhibitor.

The exchange between Sears and Wood has, however, served a good purpose; it has given Sears an opportunity to reaffirm United Artists' selling policy in no uncertain terms, thus fortifying the exhibitor against the unscrupulous salesman.

If any among you has been forced to accept other United Artists' pictures in order to obtain "Stage Door Canteen," you should report this information either to your organization leaders or directly to Grad Sears.

* * *

THE WAR PRODUCTION BOARD has issued an order prohibiting the transfer of Freon gas, a refrigerant commonly used in cooling systems, to twenty specific types of activities including motion picture theatres.

The purpose of the order is to conserve all available supplies of this gas for use in industrial air-conditioning, commercial refrigeration, and hospitals.

Officials of the WPB pointed out that the order will not necessarily affect exhibitors, since an air-conditioning unit can operate efficiently for years so long as it retains its refrigerant. A leak in the cooling system, however, will cause a loss of this gas, resulting in a complete shutdown of the system because replacement of this gas will not be available.

Those of you who have air-conditioning units should have them checked carefully, and arrangements should be made for their proper maintenance; the cost to you will be far less than the losses that will result during the summer months when many patrons seek the cool interior of a theatre for relief from the heat.

* * *

THE NEWSPAPERS REPORT that Dr. Gustav Egloff, president of the American Institute of Chemists, has predicted that, in the near future, automobile tires will have a minimum life of 100,000 miles, because "they will be made of synthetic rubber designed to meet exact specifications."

Dr. Egloff predicted also that new alloys will make the automobile more durable, but he was concerned over the danger that "things may last too long."

A few decades ago, predictions of that sort would have been considered fantastic. But in this day and age the public considers nothing as being beyond the realm of possibility; many among us have witnessed, from their earliest stages, the growth of the automobile, radio, airplane, and motion picture industries, to mention but a few. The great strides made by these

(Continued on last page)

"Best Foot Forward" with Lucille Ball, William Gaxton and Virginia Weidler

(MGM, no release date set; time, 93 min.)

Based on the successful Broadway stage play of the same title, "Best Foot Forward" is a highly entertaining musical, full of youthful exuberance; it should please all types of audiences. The presence of Harry James and his orchestra should be of considerable help at the box-office insofar as the younger set is concerned. The action, which takes place at a boys' military school during the senior prom, revolves around a fading movie queen and her press agent, who take advantage of an invitation to the dance from a love-sick cadet as a means of gaining publicity. There are many laugh-provoking situations spread all the way through, and much of the dialogue is brisk and funny. The performance of the young principals, most of whom appeared in the stage version, are engaging, with that of Nancy Walker's outstanding. She is a fine comedienne with a promising future in films. Lucille Ball, as the movie queen, and William Gaxton, as her agent, are ideally cast. The lavish backgrounds and costumes are enhanced by the Technicolor photography. The musical numbers are very good, particularly "Buckle Down, Winsocki," the hit tune, which will send your patrons out of the theatre humming:—

When Lucille Ball accepts his invitation to attend the senior prom, Cadet Tommy Dix finds matters complicated; not expecting that Lucille would come, he had also invited Virginia Weidler, his sweetheart. Kenny Bowers and Jack Jordan, Tommy's classmates, persuade him to write Virginia that he is ill, and to introduce Lucille at the dance as Virginia. Lucille objects to Tommy's plan, but William Gaxton, her press agent, urges her to go through with it, promising her lots of publicity. Meanwhile Virginia arrives to nurse Tommy through his illness, and becomes furious when she learns about Lucille. Tommy brings Lucille to the prom and introduces her as Virginia. When his classmates accidentally learn who she really is, the other girls are soon forgotten. A kiss waltz danced by Lucille and Tommy raises Virginia's ire. She rushes out on the dance floor and tears a flower from Lucille's dress as a souvenir. The other girls follow her lead and, before long, Lucille is stripped of her outer garments. The incident creates a scandal, and Tommy is threatened with expulsion. Realizing that graduation meant everything to Tommy, Lucille eloquently pleads his cause to the indignant head of the school, gaining for him reinstatement and a reconciliation with Virginia.

Irving Brecher and Fred Finklehoffe wrote the screen play, Arthur Freed produced it, and Edward Buzzell directed it. The cast includes Gloria DeHaven, June Allyson, Chill Wills, Henry O'Neill, Sara Haden and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"A Gentle Gangster" with Barton MacLane and Molly Lamont

(Republic, May 10; time, 57 min.)

Fairly good program entertainment. It has the ingredients to satisfy the followers of gangster films, as well as a homespun quality that will please the family trade. The story, which revolves around a trio of reformed gangsters, has a novel twist; the gangsters are compelled to revert to their old tactics in

order to clean out an element of which they had once been a part. There is quite a bit of human interest, and the leading characters, because of their honesty towards each other, arouse the spectator's sympathy. The performances are engaging. Part of the story is told by the flashback method:—

Barton MacLane, bootlegger and speakeasy owner, gives up his nefarious dealings when Molly Lamont, his sweetheart and singer in the speakeasy, threatens to leave him unless he marries and settles down. Ray Teale and Rosella Towne, and Dick Wessel and Joyce Compton, two couples in MacLane's gang, decide to join Molly and MacLane in turning over a new leaf. The three couples marry and settle down in a small town where MacLane becomes an insurance salesman, Wessel a barber, and Teale a grocer. For twenty years they lead exemplary lives. Molly and MacLane have a son (Jackie Ray), and Rosella and Teale have two children (Edwin Mills and Marion Colby). One day Reverend Crane Whitely visits MacLane to ask his aid in closing a gambling house operated by Jack LaRue. Both Teale and Wessel had been threatened by LaRue's henchmen, who were attempting to establish a "protection" racket; but it is only after MacLane learns that Teale's son had become involved with LaRue because of a gambling debt that the trio decide to act. They visit LaRue and offer to buy out his gambling house, allowing him a substantial profit. LaRue laughs at them. The three men discuss the situation with their wives, who urge them to revert to their former characters to deal with the situation. Fortified with this moral support, MacLane and his buddies smash up the gambling house and run LaRue out of town. During the melee, MacLane's past is revealed to the Reverend, but the minister pretends that the townspeople had known the facts ever since the three couples first arrived.

Jefferson Parker and Al Martin wrote the screen play, A. W. Hackel produced it, and Phil Rosen directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Yanks Ahoy" with William Tracy and Joe Sawyer

(United Artists, August 6; time, 60 min.)

Mediocre program fare. It is a continuation of the Hal Roach series of service comedies dealing with the adventures of William Tracy and Joe Sawyer as two Army sergeants. Unlike the other pictures, this one runs for sixty minutes, taking it out of the so-called streamlined classification. It is, however, no more than two-reel stuff stretched to feature length. The picture depends for its laughs on old-fashioned slapstick situations and gags, some of which may prove amusing to the youngsters. Adult audiences will find it dull and tiring. Marjorie Woodward is cast as an Army nurse, but, other than looking pretty, she has little to do:—

Sergeants William Tracy and Joe Sawyer board a transport for overseas service. Tracy, who had never been to sea, is intrigued by everything that he sees. He amazes the ship's officers with his photographic mind, which enables him to remember in detail whatever he reads and sees. One night Tracy notices a succession of flash lights coming from the shore line, but he does not report the incident. He becomes aware of it again, however, when he hears from Sawyer that

a saboteur is suspected of being aboard ship. Tracy rushes to the Captain to report what he had seen and, because of his ability to remember in perfect detail the entire succession of flashes, the Captain is able to ascertain that it was a message intended for a spy on board. To prove that he has more ability than Tracy, Sawyer determines to capture the spy. But the man he suspects and drags to the Captain's quarters turns out to be the first mate. Moreover, he had dragged him away from the ship's wheel, leaving the ship without a pilot. Tracy, however, had passed the wheel house and, noticing that the wheel was unattended, had guided the ship safely through a treacherous passage. Tracy's and Sawyer's rivalry eventually get them into trouble with their superiors, but, through a stroke of luck, both capture a Japanese submarine, winning high honors for their bravery.

Eugene Conrad and Edward E. SeaBrook wrote the screen play, Fred Guiol produced it, and Kurt Neumann directed it. The cast includes Robert Kent, Minor Watson, Walter Woolf King and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Hit the Ice" with Abbott and Costello

(Universal, July 2; time, 82 min.)

"Hit the Ice" is by far the best of the recent Abbott and Costello comedies; it will completely satisfy their fans, and amuse those who have previously looked with indifference upon the antics of these two comedians. Though nonsensical, the story has more substance than those of their previous pictures, and the fact that some of the gags and slapstick situations are old does not detract from their amusing quality; this is due mainly to the expert clowning of Lou Costello. An hilarious sequence is the one in which Costello, on ice skates, is the end man in a snap-the-whip game. A number of tuneful melodies sung by Ginny Simms add much to the entertainment values. Miss Simms not only has a pleasant voice, but she is also pretty and photographs well. Johnny Long and his orchestra provide the music:—

When Sheldon Leonard, a gangster posing as a sick patient in a hospital, overhears Bud Abbott and Lou Costello, news photographers, speaking of "shooting" people, he mistakes them for two Detroit gun men, who were to help him rob a bank across the street from the hospital. Thinking that they are being hired to take pictures of Leonard and his henchmen entering and leaving the bank, the boys agree to help cover the escape. The robbery takes place and the boys snap pictures of the fleeing gangsters, who return to the hospital without any of the doctors or nurses being aware of their absence. Abbott and Costello are mistaken by the police as the hold-up men, but they manage to escape and go into hiding. Meanwhile Leonard decides to go to Sun Valley for his "health," taking with him Elyse Knox, his nurse, and Patric Knowles, his physician. Abbott and Costello follow him, hoping to prove their innocence and to turn him over to the authorities. At the resort, the boys secure employment as waiters on skates. Leonard, who by this time had become aware of the fact that the boys were photographers and not gangsters, seeks to obtain from them the negative incriminating him. He invites them to an isolated cabin to discuss a deal. Suspecting foul play, the boys enlist the aid of Elyse and

Knowles. After a series of hilarious events, including a wild chase on skis, the boys capture Leonard and his henchmen, and establish their own innocence.

Robert Lees wrote the screen play, Alex Gottlieb produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it. The cast includes Joe Sawyer, Marc Lawrence and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Constant Nymph" with Joan Fontaine and Charles Boyer

(Warner Bros., July 24; time, 112 min.)

A fine emotional drama with a strong appeal for women. Although the story seems suited for the classes more than for the masses, the popularity of the leading players, coupled with their brilliant acting should put it over also with the masses. It was produced once before in England, in 1934, but this version is by far superior. The first part of the story is a little slow, but it retains its grip on the spectator from beginning to end. Joan Fontaine, as an unsophisticated yet wordly adolescent, is superb. By her performance she confirms her right to be known as one of the screen's leading actresses. The others in the cast, too, do fine work. There is heart interest throughout, and much sympathy is felt for both Miss Fontaine and Charles Boyer, because of their frustrated love. Even Alexis Smith, as Boyer's wife, wins sympathy. Edmund Goulding's direction is sensitive, and the production values are first rate:—

Montagu Love, an expatriated English composer, living in a Tyrolean village with his mistress and four motherless daughters, is visited by Charles Boyer, a promising composer and family friend. Joan Fontaine, Love's fourteen-year-old daughter, loves Boyer secretly. Shortly after Boyer's arrival, Love dies. Charles Coburn, the children's aristocratic uncle, arrives from England with Alexis Smith, his glamorous daughter, to take care of them. Alexis and Boyer are attracted to each other, and marry. Brenda Marshall, one of the children, marries Peter Lorre, and Jean Muir, the eldest daughter, joins an opera company. Joan and Joyce Reynolds, her younger sister, accompany Boyer and Alexis to London where they are placed in a school. Alexis' determination to make a "social lion" out of him upsets Boyer and affects his compositions. Joan and Joyce, accustomed to freedom, run away from school. Boyer insists that, because of her weak heart, Joan must not be sent back. Joan remains to help Boyer with his music, and Joyce leaves to pay Brenda a visit. Joan inspires Boyer to compose beautiful music. Alexis senses Joan's love for him, and makes things miserable for her. Unable to control her jealousy, Alexis accuses Boyer of having an affair with Joan. The quarrel awakens Boyer's love for Joan, and he asks her to go away with him. Joan, however, refuses to hurt Alexis. At a concert, where Boyer's music is introduced successfully, Alexis realizes his deep love for Joan and offers him his freedom. Boyer rushes home only to find Joan dead; the excitement caused by his success had proved too great a strain for her heart.

Kathryn Scola wrote the screen play from the novel and play by Margaret Kennedy and Basil Dean. Edmund Goulding directed it, and Henry Blanke produced it.

There are no objectionable situations.

industries within our lifetime has so accustomed us to amazing accomplishments that, today, an announcement of things to come, based on scientific research, is treated with sobriety.

To this writer, however, the interesting part of Dr. Egloff's statement is his concern over the fact that "things may last too long." Just think of what the future may hold. Automobiles, radios, airplanes, buildings, razor blades, refrigerators, and what have you—all built to last a lifetime. Such progress would undoubtedly change the economic structure of the world. With things built to last forever, it follows that the hours of daily toil will be sharply decreased, perhaps to no more than one hour a day—or a week. It follows also that, with fewer hours to toil, there will be more hours to play.

All of this would seem to leave the motion picture in an enviable position if and when this "Technocratical" period comes into being. Our theatres may yet be built to last indefinitely, and our projection and sound equipment, once made, may never wear out.

But can science evolve a system by which a motion picture, once produced, would entertain one forever? We think not. It may be possible for us to get along with material things that remain the same so long as they serve their intended purpose, but our emotional life demands variety. People will always want to have their phantasy-life stimulated, their ideas confirmed, and their emotions stirred and satisfied. And that is where we of the motion picture industry come in. We will have to continue satisfying their desire with more and better pictures.

Will somebody please shut up that fellow in the gallery who keeps shouting, "what about television?"

* * *

WHILE ON THE SUBJECT of what the future holds, I think you will be interested in a recent bulletin sent out by Colonel Harry A. Cole, president of Allied Theatre Owners of Texas, who had this to say regarding a post war plan:

"Did you go through the last War?

"It was a picnic, compared to this one.

"Did you go through the Depression that followed?

"Unless we all start planning now, it may well be that this War will be followed by a Depression that will dwarf all previous Depressions—even by a Revolution, both economic and Governmental.

"This is not an emergency that can be left to our Government alone. It cannot be turned over to a few Industrial leaders and economic experts, though these can help. We cannot say 'let George do it'—it's too big a job for George. Every one of us will have to do his share and more than his share; and if he does twice as much as he thinks he should, we may be able to avert a tragedy.

"What can you do? What can I do?

"Here's how I see it. Many of us are accumulating capital, either in the bank or in war bonds: or, maybe we have paid off debts and thus accumulated credit, which can be turned into cash. Now you can emulate the ostrich, and keep the money in the bank 'for a rainy day.' Inevitably if you do that, the rainy day will come and will last so long that the nest egg will disappear—and then what? Our Government took over the last Depression—rather late if I remember—and spent Billions. But as I also remember, those Billions saved lots of suffering, but did not stop the Depression. *It did prevent a Revolution.*

"So my plan is this: Get ready right now to spend plenty just as soon as war ends, or just as soon as men and material become available. Don't lean back with the idea that the automobile business, or the radio business, or the electric refrigeration business will all have such expansion that unemployment will be absorbed and everything will be jake. All the foregoing will help greatly, but this will not do the job. There will be 30,000,000 men and women out of jobs, released from war and war plants. You and I must see they have work: a few large industries plus all that a paternalistic Government can do, will not be enough.

"To get down to brass tacks, get you an architect right now and have him start drawing plans to remodel your theatre, or to build a new one. Talk to your equipment dealer and survey with him your needs. Have your ideas definitely lined up to spend \$1,000—\$5,000—\$10,000—\$25,000, or much more if you can invest wisely. Don't be niggardly. Don't figure how much you can save: try honestly to see how much you can spend wisely.

"And remember—this is not an altruistic plan. It is a long-sighted selfish effort to preserve yourself, your business, and your country.

"And it will accomplish a similar purpose to plan on putting money into your home too."

Colonel Cole's plan seems to be a far-sighted one; it is worthy of your serious consideration.

* * *

BY THE TIME YOU RECEIVE this issue, the industry's new drive for the sale of \$130,000,000 in war stamps during the month of July will have been launched. As most of you already know, this is a special drive to raise funds for the construction of an aircraft carrier, to be named the *Shangri-La*.

The idea behind this drive is to induce every one of our 130,000,000 people to buy one dollar's worth of war stamps, in addition to their regular bond purchases.

Every exhibitor is urged to do his utmost to put this campaign over with a bang.

* * *

NEW ZEALAND MOTION PICTURE EXHIBITORS' ASSOCIATION (INC.)

49-51 Courtenay Place, Wellington, C.3

13th, May, 1943.

Mr. P. S. Harrison,
HARRISON'S REPORTS,
1270 Sixth Avenue,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

I am enclosing with this, bank draft for \$17.50 in payment of the Association's subscription to HARRISON'S REPORTS for the twelve months ending 21st, April, 1944.

I will look forward to your acknowledgement of this in due course.

I would like to add a note of appreciation of the Reports which we read with considerable interest and find of real value to the industry in New Zealand.

With kind regards,

Your faithfully,

C. R. EDMOND,

Dominion Secretary.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXV

NEW YORK, N. Y., SATURDAY, JULY 3, 1943

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Mademoiselle France—MGM (see "Reunion in France")	1942, 194
Man on America's Conscience, The—MGM (see "Tennessee Johnson")	1942, 204
Mantrap, The—Republic (58 min.)	80
Man Without a Conscience, The—PRC (see "Tomorrow We Live")	1942, 159
Margin for Error—20th Century-Fox (74 min.)	11
McGuerrins from Brooklyn, The—United Artists (45m.)	34
Meanest Man in the World, The—20th Century-Fox (57 min.)	10
Mr. Big—Universal (73 min.)	86
Mr. Lucky—RKO (100 min.)	75
Mission to Moscow—Warner Bros. (123 min.)	74
Money for Jam—Universal (see "It Ain't Hay")	47
Moon Is Down, The—20th Century-Fox (90 min.)	44
More the Merrier, The—Columbia (104 min.)	82
Mug Town—Universal (59 min.)	6
Murder in Times Square—Columbia (65 min.)	63
My Friend Flicka—20th Century-Fox (89 min.)	58
My Son Alone—United Artists (see "American Empire")	1942, 199
My Son, The Hero—PRC (67 min.)	35
Mysterious Doctor, The—Warner Bros. (57 min.)	34
Next of Kin—Universal (84 min.)	58
Night Plane from Chungking—Paramount (69 min.)	2
No Place for a Lady—Columbia (66 min.)	86
Off the Beaten Track—Universal (see "Behind the Eight Ball")	1942, 199
One Dangerous Night—Columbia (77 min.)	31
Ox-Bow Incident, The—20th Century-Fox (75 min.)	74
Pilot No. 5—MGM (70 min.)	59
Power of the Press—Columbia (63 min.)	35
Presenting Lily Mars—MGM (103 min.)	70
Prison Mutiny—Monogram (see "You Can't Beat the Law")	23
Purple V, The—Republic (58 min.)	46
Queen of Spies, The—Republic (see "Joan of Ozark")	1942, 119
Redhead from Manhattan—Columbia (59 min.)	99
Reveille with Beverly—Columbia (78 min.)	71
Rhythm of the Islands—Universal (59 min.)	44
Riders of the Northwest Mounted—Columbia (57 min.)	not reviewed
Sagebrush Law—RKO (56 min.)	not reviewed
Salute for Three—Paramount (78 min.)	51
Sarong Girl—Monogram (62 min.)	79
Secrets of the Underworld—Republic (70 min.)	26
Shadow of a Doubt—Universal (108 min.)	11
Shantytown—Republic (66 min.)	67
She Has What It Takes—Columbia (66 min.)	90
Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon—Universal (68 min.)	2
Sherlock Holmes in Washington—Universal (70 min.)	54
Silent Witness, The—Monogram (62 min.)	4
Silver Skates—Monogram (74 min.)	14
Slightly Dangerous—MGM (94 min.)	40
Something to Shout About—Columbia (90 min.)	62
Somewhere in France—United Artists (84 min.)	30
So Proudly We Hail—Paramount (124 min.)	103
Spitfire—RKO (90 min.)	67
Spy Train—Monogram (61 min.)	87

Squadron Leader X—RKO (99 min.)	22
Stage Door Canteen—United Artists (131 min.)	78
Star Spangled Rhythm—Paramount (99 min.)	4
Stormy Weather—20th Century-Fox (77 min.)	86
Submarine Alert—Paramount (67 min.)	102
Swing Shift Maisie—MGM (86 min.)	75
Swing Your Partner—Republic (72 min.)	70
Tahiti Honey—Republic (69 min.)	54
Tarzan Triumphs—RKO (78 min.)	15
Taxi, Mister—United Artists (45 min.)	67
Tenting Tonight on the Old Camp Ground—Universal (61 min.)	not reviewed
Terror House—PRC (62 min.)	91
Texas Rangers in Bad Men of Thunder Gap—PRC (59 min.)	not reviewed
Texas Rangers in the Rangers Take Over—PRC (61 min.)	not reviewed
That Nasty Nuisance—United Artists (43 min.)	90
They Came to Blow Up America—20th Century-Fox (73 min.)	66
They Got Me Covered—RKO (95 min.)	3
This Land Is Mine—RKO (103 min.)	48
Three Hearts for Julia—MGM (89 min.)	7
Thumbs Up—Republic (67 min.)	98
Thundering Trails—Republic (56 min.)	not reviewed
Tonight We Raid Calais—20th Century-Fox (70 min.)	54
Trouble Through Billets—Columbia (see "Blondie for Victory")	1942, 134
Truck Busters—Warner Bros. (57 min.)	15
Two Weeks to Live—RKO (76 min.)	23
Two Senoritas from Chicago—Columbia (68 min.)	90
Two Tickets to London—Universal (77 min.)	99
White Savage—Universal (75 min.)	62
Wings Over the Pacific—Monogram (60 min.)	98
Yanks Are Coming, The—PRC (68 min.)	3
You Can't Beat the Law—Monogram (64 min.)	23
Young and Willing—United Artists (83 min.)	31
Youngest Profession, The—MGM (81 min.)	39

RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

4212 Saddles and Sagebrush—Hayden (55m) (re.)	Apr. 27
4024 Redhead from Manhattan—Velez-Duane	May 6
4001 The More the Merrier—Arthur-McCrea	May 13
4025 The Boy from Stalingrad—Bobby Samartzich	May 20
4018 It's a Great Life—Singleton-Lake	May 27
4204 Law of the Northwest—Starrett (59 m.)	May 27
4019 Two Senoritas from Chicago—Falkenburg-Davis	June 10
4017 Crime Doctor—Baxter-Lindsay (re.)	June 22
Good Luck Mr. Yates—Trevor-Buchanan	June 29
What's Buzzin', Cousin?—Ann Miller	July 8
Appointment in Berlin—Sanders-Chapman	July 15
First Comes Courage—Aherne-Oberon	July 29
Robin Hood of the Range—Starrett	July 29

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

326 Air Raid Wardens—Laurel-Hardy	April-May
327 Assignment in Brittany—Aumont-Peters	April-May
328 Bataan—Taylor	June-July Aug.
329 Harrigan's Kid—Gargan	June-July Aug.
330 Presenting Lily Mars—Garland	June-July Aug.
331 The Youngest Profession—Weidler	June-July Aug.
332 Pilot No. 5—Tone-Peters	June-July Aug.
333 Dubarry Was a Lady—Ball-Skelton	June-July Aug.
334 Hitler's Madman—Carradine	June-July Aug.
370 Random Harvest—Garson-Colman	June-July Aug.
380 The Human Comedy—Rooney	June-July Aug.

- 4436 Here Comes Mr. Zerk—All Star (16m) July 23
4408 Higher Than a Kite—Stooges July 30

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

M-437 Here at Home—Min. (11m).....May 22
M-438 Memories of Australia—Min. (10m).....June 12
S-467 Dog House—Pete Smith (10m).....June 12
K-483 That's Why I Left You—Pass. Par. (10m).....June 12
C-495 Farm Hands—Our Gang (11m).....June 19
W-448 Who Killed Who—Cartoon (8m).....June 19
T-420 Scenic Oregon—Traveltalk (9m).....June 26
W-449 Yankee Doodle Mouse—Cartoon (8m).....June 26
W-450 The Uninvited Pest—Cartoon (8m).....July 17

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

A-402 Heavenly Music—Special (22m).....May 1

Paramount—One Reel

U2-5 Jasper's Music Lesson—Mad. Mod. (7m) (re.) May 21
E2-8 Ration for the Duration—Popeye (6m).....May 28
J2-5 Popular Science No. 5 (10m).....June 11
A2-8 Rationed Rhythm—Headliner (10m).....June 4
A2-9 Revival of Moments of Charm—Head. (10m).....June 18
E2-9 The Hungry Goat—Popeye (6m).....June 25
Y2-4 At the Cage Door Canteen—Speaking of Animals (8m).....June 25
R2-8 Amphibian Fighters—Spotlight (9m).....July 2
W2-4 Superman in the Underground World—(8m) (re.).....June 18
L2-5 Unusual Occupations No. 5—(10m).....July 9
W2-5 Superman in Secret Agent—(8m).....July 30
R2-9 Where the Cactus Grow—Spotlight (9m).....July 30
U2-6 The Truck That Flew—Mad. Mod. (9m).....Aug. 6

RKO—One Reel

34406 It's Tommy Tucker Time—Jamborees (8m) Apr. 16
34309 Golf Limited—Sportscope (8m).....Apr. 23
34105 Fall Out—Fall In—Disney (7m).....Apr. 23
34310 Racing Royalty—Sportscope (8m).....May 21
34203 North African Album—Vic. Spec. (9m).....June 3

RKO—Two Reels

33106 Medicine on Guard—This is Amer. (20m) Apr. 9
33706 Radio Runaround—Leon Errol (18m).....May 7
33107 Merchant Seamen—This is Amer. (17m).....May 7
33406 Hot Foot—Edgar Kennedy (17m).....May 14
33108 Lieutenant Smith—This is Amer. (20m).....June 4

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

3569 The Last Round Up—Terry-Toon (7m).....May 14
3902 Jungle Land—Lew Lehr (9m).....June 4
3571 Pandora's Box—Terry-Toon (7m).....June 11
3570 Mopping Up—Terry-Toon (7m).....June 25
3401 Women in Blue—World Today (10m).....July 2

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

Vol. 9 No. 10 Show Business at War—
March of Time (20 min.).....May 21
Vol. 9 No. 11 Invasion—
March of Time (20 min.).....June 18

Universal—One Reel

7246 The Dizzy Acrobat—Lantz Cartune (7m).....May 31
7360 Mirror of Sub-Marine Life—Var. Views (9m).....May 31
7361 Confusion in India—Var. Views (9m).....June 21
7247 Canine Commandos—Lantz Cartune (7m).....June 28
7381 The Armless Dentist—Per. Odd.June 28
7382 Western Cowgirl—Per. Odd.July 19
7362 Any Chickens Today—Var. Views.....July 26
7248 Ration Board—Lantz CartuneJuly 27

Universal—Two Reels

8691 A Fight to the Death—Don Winslow No. 11 (16m).....June 15
8692 The Death Trap—Don W. No. 12 (16m).....June 22
7130 Russian Revels—Musical (15m).....June 23
8693 Capturing the Scorpion—Don W. No. 13 (19m).....June 29

Vitaphone—One Reel

8508 All American Band—Mel. Mas. (10m).....May 22
8509 Childhood Days—Mel. Mas. (10m) (re.).....June 5
8715 Jack Rabbit & the Beanstalk—Mer. Mel. (7m) (re.).....June 12
8716 The Aristocat—Mer. Mel. (7m) (re.).....June 19
8609 Yankee Doodle Daffy—L. Tune (7m) (re.).....July 3
8718 Wacki-Ki Wabbit—Mer. Mel. (7m) (re.).....July 3
8611 Porky Pigs Feet—Looney Tune (7m).....July 17
8717 Tin Pan Alley Cats—Mer. Mel. (7m) (re.).....July 17
8411 Gray, White & Blue—Sports (10m).....June 19
8510 U. S. Service Bands—Mel. Mas. (10m).....July 24
8719 Hiss & Make Up—Mer. Mel. (7m).....July 31
8610 Scrappy Happy Daffy—Looney Tune (7m).....Aug. 21
8720 Corny Concerto—Mer. Mel. (7m).....Aug. 21
8721 Fin-N-Caddie—Mer. Mel. (7m).....Aug. 28

Vitaphone—Two Reels

8111 Three Cheers for the Girls—B'way Brev. (20 min.).....May 8
8106 The Man Killers—B'way Brev. (20m).....May 29
8006 Champions Training Champions—Special (20m) (re.).....June 26
8112 Happy Times and Jolly Moments—B'way Brev. (20 m).....July 10
8005 Mountain Fighters—Special (20m).....Aug. 7

NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK RELEASE DATES

Pathe News

35290 Wed. (E) July 7
35191 Sat. (O) July 10
35292 Wed. (E) July 14
35193 Sat. (O) July 17
35294 Wed. (E) July 21
35195 Sat. (O) July 24
35296 Wed. (E) July 28
35197 Sat. (O) July 31
35298 Wed. (E) Aug. 4
35199 Sat. (O) Aug. 7

Universal

202 Friday.....July 2
203 Wednesday July 7
204 Friday.....July 9
205 Wednesday July 14
206 Friday.....July 16
207 Wednesday July 21
208 Friday.....July 23
209 Wednesday July 28
210 Friday.....July 30
211 Wednesday Aug. 4
212 Friday.....Aug. 6

Fox Movietone

87 Wednesday ..July 7
88 SaturdayJuly 10
89 Wednesday ..July 14
90 SaturdayJuly 17
91 Wednesday ..July 21
92 SaturdayJuly 24
93 Wednesday ..July 28
94 SaturdayJuly 31
95 Wednesday ..Aug. 4
96 SaturdayAug. 7

Paramount News

89 SaturdayJuly 7
90 Wednesday ..July 10
91 SaturdayJuly 14
92 Wednesday ..July 17
93 SaturdayJuly 21
94 Wednesday ..July 24
95 SaturdayJuly 28
96 Wednesday ..July 31
97 SaturdayAug. 4
98 Wednesday ..Aug. 7

Metrotone News

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287 Tuesday ...July 13
288 Thursday ...July 15
289 Tuesday ...July 20
290 Thursday ...July 22
291 Tuesday ...July 27
292 Thursday ...July 29
293 Tuesday ...Aug. 3
294 Thursday ...Aug. 5
295 Tuesday ...Aug. 10

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Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

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Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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SATURDAY, JULY 10, 1943

No. 28

HERE AND THERE

A HIGHLIGHT OF THE three-day convention held last week by New Jersey Allied was the address by Abram F. Myers, National Allied's general counsel and board chairman, who urged that the industry use greater caution in its dealings with the government, lest Congress and the general public get the impression that the motion picture has ceased its function as a medium of entertainment, and has become, instead, an instrument of propaganda, a sort of "mouthpiece" for certain political factions.

Myers made particular mention of Warner Brothers' "Mission to Moscow," which, he claimed, "has some of the characteristics of partisan political propaganda." He mentioned also the position taken recently by industry leaders who sought an appropriation from Congress for the continuance of the motion picture bureau of the domestic branch of the O.W.I., with Lowell Mellett retained as its head.

In stating that "the industry should not permit itself to be catalogued as anything but a well-conducted private business engaged solely in providing entertainment and with no interest in politics," Mr. Myers hits the nail on the head.

The prime function of the motion picture is to entertain. The people who pay their money at the box-office are of different political beliefs, and if the motion picture they have paid an admission to see expounds political views with which they are in thorough disagreement, it will serve only to keep them away from the theatre. The motion picture is not a newspaper, which, in its editorial columns expounds the political doctrines of the publisher. When people disagree with the editorial policy of a newspaper, they don't buy that paper. When, because of a change either in the policy of the newspaper, or in the views held by the reader, there exists a conflict between the two, the reader merely discontinues his subscription to the paper. And if the motion picture should become the medium of expressing political opinions, the exhibitor may find himself in the position of the newsdealer with unsold papers, excepting that the newsdealer gets a refund.

Although our business is primarily entertainment, we must be cognizant of the fact that we have a definite place in the war effort. Ours is a most powerful medium for the dissemination of information for the enlightenment and instruction of the public. To help the war effort, we should use this medium to its utmost capacity. But, as Mr. Myers counsels, it should

be kept clear that we are not a propaganda agency for anything except the American tradition, with no trace of political partisanship.

* * *

OUR RECENT EDITORIALS regarding the granting of relief to exhibitors by the distributors, brings forth the following statement from Mr. Ned E. Depinet, president of RKO Radio Pictures:

"Dear Pete:

"I found the article in your June 12th issue concerning the granting of relief to exhibitors where justified to be of great interest.

"I should like to take this opportunity to state that RKO's established policy is to grant equitable relief to every exhibitor having a just complaint. Our men in the field and in the Home Office faithfully carry out this policy in order to preserve the good will obtaining between RKO and its customers."

Other company heads who have indicated their willingness to grant equitable relief to exhibitors are Abe Montague, general sales manager of Columbia, and Joseph Bernhard, vice-president of Warner Brothers.

Montague, in a letter to Pete Wood, of the ITO of Ohio, stated that "it has been and we will continue to make it our effort to help those who are deserving of help, particularly the small-town theatre owner."

Bernhard, speaking at the opening session of his company's regional sales meeting in New York City, declared: "We welcome any of our customers to call to our attention their individual difficulties. We assure them that they will be met with an open door and an open mind, particularly in situations affected by population shifts due to war conditions."

Thus, the record shows that every one of the eight major distributors has stated that it is ready to aid the hard-hit exhibitor. Now let's have some performances.

* * *

ON JULY 1ST OF THIS year HARRISON'S REPORTS entered its twenty-fifth year of publication.

Though I made no announcement of this fact, many friends and subscribers have noted the event, and they have been kind enough to send me congratulatory letters.

I want to take this opportunity of thanking them for their good wishes and for their support throughout these many years; without their support, HARRISON'S REPORTS could not have survived.

**"Crime Doctor" with Warner Baxter
and Margaret Lindsay**

(Columbia, June 22; time, 66 min.)

Based on the popular radio series of the same title, "Crime Doctor" emerges as a pretty good program mystery melodrama. The theme—an amnesia victim who builds a new life while trying to reconstruct the old one—has been used before; nevertheless, it holds one's attention throughout, providing several tensely exciting situations. The picture will find favor with patrons who enjoy figuring out solutions, for the victim's past life is not divulged until the end. Warner Baxter, as the victim, gives a convincing performance. The direction is good. Although not important, the love interest is pleasant:—

As a result of his being hurled from a speeding car, Warner Baxter becomes an amnesia victim. Troubled because he knew nothing of his past life, Baxter accepts the hospitality of Dr. Ray Collins, who offers to help regain his memory. Collins, unsuccessful in his efforts to help Baxter, persuades him to start a new life. Baxter studies medicine and, within ten years, becomes a successful psychiatrist, particularly skillful in the rehabilitation of criminals. In this work, he meets and falls in love with Margaret Lindsay, a social worker. By virtue of his outstanding work, Baxter is appointed head of a prison parole board. Baxter learns of his past life when Dorothy Tree, a prisoner, furious because she had been denied a parole, reveals that he had been head of a criminal gang, suspected by the police of a payroll robbery. The gang, believing that Baxter meant to double-cross them, had thrown him out of the car. Baxter resigns as head of the parole board. He contacts the members of his gang and urges them to reconstruct the events of the night his accident had occurred. They agree, still thinking that he has the stolen money. They take him to a hotel room where they had met on the night of the robbery. There, in a struggle with the gang, Baxter is slugged. The blow causes him to regain his memory and, gaining the upper hand, he turns the gang and himself over to the police. There follows an exciting trial at the end of which Baxter, because of the record of his new life, is exonerated.

Graham Baker and Louis Lantz wrote the screen play, Ralph Cohn produced it, and Michael Gordon directed it. The cast includes John Litel, Harold Huber, Constance Worth, Leon Ames and others.

There are no objectionable situations.

**"Bomber's Moon" with Annabella
and George Montgomery**

(20th Century-Fox, July 30; time, 70 min.)

This is another one of those implausible program war melodramas that no one would have missed had it never been made. It may have some appeal to indiscriminating patrons, but most audiences will find it tiring. The story is the familiar one of the flyer who is shot down over Germany, eventually making his escape to England in a burst of Hollywood heroics. The treatment is completely lacking in novelty and, by the time the picture is half-way through, one knows just what is going to happen. Consequently, one loses interest in the outcome. The film deserves no

better than the lower half of a mid-week double bill:—

Shot down over Germany during a bombing raid, George Montgomery, an American flyer, is captured and placed in a concentration camp, where he meets Annabella, a Russian doctor, and Kent Taylor, a Czech officer. They, too, were prisoners. Montgomery joins them in a scheme to escape. They break out during an air raid. Annabella, who had connections with an underground movement in Germany, leads them to the home of Walter Kingsford, underground leader, who makes arrangements for their escape to England. On the eve of their departure, Taylor whips out a gun and reveals himself as a Gestapo agent. In the scuffle that follows, Annabella shoots Taylor. Kingsford is killed by a stray bullet. With the identification papers and money Kingsford had obtained for them, Annabella and Montgomery make their way to Rotterdam. A general alarm giving their descriptions is broadcast by the Gestapo, and they narrowly miss capture when a Nazi youngster recognizes them. After arranging with a Dutch fisherman to take them to England, Montgomery notices a Spitfire with R.A.F. markings landing on a German airfield nearby. He orders the fisherman to leave with Annabella, and remains behind to investigate. Knocking out a German soldier, Montgomery assumes his identity and learns that Martin Kosleck, a Nazi flyer, intended to fly the Spitfire to England to bomb a train bearing Winston Churchill. Montgomery attempts to waylay Kosleck, but is captured. In a daring escape, Montgomery manages to fly off in a Nazi plane, intercepting Kosleck and shooting him down. Because of the fact that he was flying a Nazi plane, Montgomery is refused permission to land in England. Annabella, however, comes to his rescue when she identifies his voice to the R.A.F.

Kenneth Gamet and Aubrey Wisberg wrote the screen play, Sol M. Wurtzel produced it, and Charles Fuhr directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Prairie Chickens" with Noah Beery, Jr.
and Jimmy Rogers**

(United Artists, May 21; time, 47 min.)

This third in the series of streamlined comedies dealing with the adventures of Noah Beery, Jr. and Jimmy Rogers, as two happy-go-lucky cowboys, is the best of the group; it has enough fast action and laughs to make it a satisfactory supporting feature. Jack Norton, as a drunken millionaire, is quite good. As a matter of fact, most of the picture's laughs are due to his antics. Particularly comical are the scenes in which the principals and a bevy of college girls are frightened by the villains posing as ghosts. Most of the situations are as old as the hills, but they do manage to amuse one:—

On his way to supervise a ranch he had inherited, Jack Norton, a millionaire inebriate, runs out of gas. He walks toward town, leaving his colored chauffeur to worry about the car. After obtaining gas, the chauffeur hurries to meet Norton, almost running down Noah Beery, Jr. and Jimmy Rogers, two happy-go-lucky cowboys, who had been walking on the road.

The chauffeur makes amends by giving Beery, whose clothes had been soiled, one of Norton's expensive suits. All three drive into town where the townspeople, mistaking Beery for Norton, give him a royal welcome. A group of college girls, on a sightseeing tour, join in the festivities. Norton, who approved of Beery impersonating him, invites the girls to spend the night at his ranch house. Later, when the townspeople discover the hoax, the boys and Norton escape to the ranch. Norton's arrival upsets the plans of Joe Sawyer, his crooked ranch foreman. Sawyer had hoped that Norton would remain in town for a few days so that he would be able to sell four thousand head of cattle without Norton's knowledge. Together with his henchmen, Sawyer hits upon a plan to scare Norton and his guests away. Dressing themselves as ghosts, they proceed to terrify every one. Rogers and Beery, however, learn of the plot and decide to take matters in hand. One by one they lasso and tie up the thieves. With Sawyer and his henchmen in custody, the boys leave in search of new adventures.

Arnold Belgard and Earle Snell wrote the screen play, Fred Guiol produced it, and Hal Roach, Jr. directed it. The cast includes Marjorie Woodworth, Rosemary LaPlanche, Raymond Hatton, Ed Gargan, Dudley Dickerson and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Victory Through Air Power"

(Walt Disney-United Artists, July 17; time, 65 min.)

This depiction of Major Alexander P. de Seversky's widely-discussed book, "Victory Through Air Power," is one of Walt Disney's finest works. While there is no denying the excellence of the production, or the fascinating manner in which Seversky's theories on air power have been presented, its appeal to the masses is difficult to evaluate, since it is not entertainment in the accepted sense of the word; as the film unfolds, it becomes somewhat like a lecture. The picture's timeliness, however, and the fact that the book has been widely read, may make a difference at the box-office.

Employing both cartoon and live action, the film opens up with a prophecy by the late General "Billy" Mitchell, who speaks of the coming role of air power. Then, through cartoon action, is traced the development of aviation, beginning in 1903 with the Wright Brothers' first airplane, on through the years to 1914 when the airplane was first put to practical use during the first World War. With the coming of peace there follows a series of endless experiments carried on both by the government and private interests to improve plane designs and attain greater speeds. The Atlantic Ocean is flown, numerous around-the-world flights made and, eventually, air mail and air passenger service become a part of our every-day life. With the coming of World War II, the airplane, because of its peace-time progress, is a potent military weapon.

From then on the film intermittently switches from cartoon to live action scenes in which Major Seversky explains the basic principles of aerial warfare, concluding with arguments that the war can be won with air power alone. Throughout the Major's narration is

shown the exploits of the Luftwaffe and the Japanese air force; the inability of naval power to combat air power; the advantages held by our enemies and ourselves; and the strategy of air power conquest.

The animation is in the best Disney manner, and that portion of the film dealing with the early history of aviation has many humorous touches. But for the most part, the subject is treated in a serious vein.

The photography is in Technicolor.

"Gals, Incorporated" with Leon Errol, Grace MacDonald and Harriet Hilliard

(Universal, July 9; time, 60 min.)

This is decidedly inferior to most of the other program comedies with music specialized in by Universal. As it stands, it is suitable mostly for the younger set, for it has plentiful musical numbers of the popular variety. The story, however, is thin and trite, and is developed in an uninteresting manner. The dialogue is silly. Few of the situations provoke so much as a grin. The players do their best, but they cannot overcome the poor material given them. Glen Gray and his Casa Loma Orchestra may mean something at the box-office:—

"Girls, Inc.," a swank cabaret operated by six girls, is backed financially by Leon Errol, middle-aged millionaire and play-boy. When Errol is notified by the attorneys for his sister (Minna Phillips) that she is coming to visit him, and that she threatens to cut him off from the family income unless he remarries and settles down, the girls plot to protect their interests. They choose Grace MacDonald, their president, to pose as Errol's wife, hoping that it will satisfy his sister. Miss Phillips arrives, bringing with her David Bacon, Errol's handsome twenty-two-year-old son by his first marriage. Grace, though attracted to Bacon, is compelled to continue with the hoax. Bacon, believing that Grace had married his father for money, despises her. Harriet Hilliard, Grace's scheming girlfriend, eagerly takes advantage of the situation to further her own interests. She showers her attentions on Bacon, much to Grace's chagrin. All need for the hoax passes when Errol's sister departs, satisfied that her brother had become domesticated. Meanwhile Harriet, to make the most of her opportunity, persuades Bacon to elope with her. Errol and Grace learn of her plan. In a hectic race against time, they catch up with Harriet and her prey before the marriage ceremony can be performed. Everything is then explained to Bacon, who gathers Grace into his arms.

Edward Dein wrote the screen play, Will Cowan produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it. The cast includes Betty Keane, Lillian Cornell, Maureen Cannon and others.

Morally suitable for all.

ORDER YOUR MISSING COPIES

Because of the disrupted mail schedules, one of your copies of HARRISON'S REPORTS may have gone astray. Look over your files and if you find a copy of any issue missing, let us know so that we may duplicate it. A sufficient number of copies for a large number of back issues is kept in stock for just such a purpose. No charge is made for duplicating lost copies.

IN AN EDITORIAL appearing in the May 22 issue, this paper took to task certain elements in the industry for their condemnation of *The Stars and Stripes*, an army overseas newspaper, which editorially blasted Hollywood, because of its depiction of the service man as a sort of super-man, capable of unheard of feats of valor. This army newspaper complained that it embarrassed an American soldier overseas to see himself portrayed on the screen as a "bloody hero," knowing full well that he was surrounded by men, women, and children "who proved that they are brave beyond the ability of Hollywood to portray."

Because those who disagreed with *The Stars and Stripes* made much of the fact that it did not mention specifically which pictures it considered offensive, HARRISON'S REPORTS, to illustrate the type of Hollywood heroics objected to by the service man, cited as one example a sequence in RKO's "Bombardier," in which Randolph Scott, an American flyer who had been shot down and captured by the Japanese while attempting to drop incendiary bombs on a Jap aircraft plant, conveniently overpowers his captors and, in as wild a burst of heroics as has ever been witnessed on the screen, single-handedly makes a shambles of the plant. A more detailed description of this sequence will be found in our May 22 editorial.

In a letter that was reproduced in the June 12 issue of this paper, Mr. Ned Depinet, president of RKO Radio Pictures, expressed his amazement over our selection of this "Bombardier" sequence as an example of that which embarrasses the American soldier, claiming that ours was the first adverse criticism.

"Bombardier" had its New York premiere last week. Most of the daily newspaper critics agreed that the picture dealt with a highly interesting subject—the training of bombardiers—and that it was fairly good entertainment. Our own review of this picture is in agreement. But here is what some of the reviews contained regarding the aforementioned sequence:

N. Y. Post: "In the end the heroism achieves the commonplace impossible of a Hollywood war film when Randolph Scott lights up an enemy target on the ground. However, the preceding sober educational passages provide some margin for imaginative fancy in the smash finale. Nothing like a good, big fire or an explosion to end a picture right."

N. Y. Sun: "Even that final bombing mission looked studio made."

N. Y. World-Telegram: "These interesting—though occasional repetitious—proceedings are climaxed by a fabulously successful raid over Japan, a dream of a raid in which only one plane was lost—and that one in a burst of heroics. . . . An imaginatively staged bombing sequence leaves the target a caldron of flame."

N. Y. Times: "The blistering climax, which is heroics in the worst bombastic style . . . comes when everybody who was at the training school makes a bombing raid on Japan. Then Mr. Scott, whose plane is shot down in the van with its load of fire bombs, turns himself (upon the ground) into a bonfire to light the target so his chums can drop their 'eggs.'"

"In concept, in manner of presentation and in performance, this is a cheap fictitious film. RKO, John Twist and Richard Wallace, the writer and director, should hang their heads in shame."

THE BOOKING OF REPUBLIC'S "King of the Cowboys," starring Roy Rogers, by one hundred and twenty-six theatres in the Chicago area during the month of July is indicative of the fact that western pictures are coming back into their own.

There was an era when westerns were shown in ace houses throughout the country. Stars like William S. Hart, Buck Jones, and Tom Mix were the top box-office names, with Mix outstanding as one of the highest paid stars in the industry.

With the advent of sound and the talking picture, westerns were relegated to the lesser houses, although frequently played on the best booking time, because of their consistent box-office draw. Booked as secondary features, these pictures were often responsible for higher returns than the so-called first feature.

The renewed interest in western films has been credited to shifts in population, particularly the influx of small-town people to war production centers. The number of first-run houses that play westerns is almost four times as large as the number that played them five years ago, and this number is increasing steadily.

The most recently developed interest in westerns, however, is owed to the excellent publicity campaign in behalf of Roy Rogers instituted by Republic. His build-up through the magazines, newspapers, and radio, supplemented by personal appearances in rodeos, theatres, children's homes, hospitals, and army camps, has won for the western many new fans.

Whether you wish to attribute this rise in popularity to shifts in population or to shrewd promotion, the fact remains that the western, sometimes referred to as the pure breed of motion picture, is coming back into its own.

* * *

AS WE GO TO PRESS, word comes that U. S. Senator Harley M. Kilgore, of West Virginia, has introduced in Congress a counterpart of the old Neely divorcement bill, which will make it unlawful for "any producer or distributor of motion picture films engaged in commerce to own, control, manage, buy, or book films for, or operate, in whole or in part, any motion picture theatre or theatres located in any State, Territory, or the District of Columbia, or to have any interest, direct or indirect, legal or equitable, through stock ownership or otherwise, in any such motion picture theatre or theatres."

According to *Film Daily*, Senator Kilgore stated that "there is no especial significance attached to his action in re-introducing the bill aside from the fact that he was reminded the old Neely bill had died when he received the exhibitor complaints. As Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Sub-Committee handling the Neely bill, he had agreed with the Department of Justice to keep it alive in the hope that the threat of the bill might tend to keep parties to the consent decree in step."

Senator Kilgore is credited with saying also that he has no intention of re-introducing the Neely block-booking bill, but will do so if he finds that it is required.

With Congress expected to call a summer recess momentarily, there is little likelihood that any action will be taken on the bill before the Fall. In the meantime, however, HARRISON'S REPORTS will watch developments closely, and will keep its subscribers informed about this pending legislation.

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No. 29

HERE AND THERE

AS REPORTED in last week's issue, Senator Harley M. Kilgore of West Virginia has introduced in the Senate a theatre-divorcement bill that would make it unlawful for any producer or distributor to "own, control, manage, buy, or book films for, or operate, in whole or in part," a motion picture theatre or theatres. Senator Kilgore's bill is identical with the one sponsored by former Senator Neely over a period of years, and it provides for the same penalties. Violators of the law would be subject to a fine of \$5000 or one year imprisonment, or both.

It was to be expected that, with the reintroduction of a theatre-divorcement bill, long-standing arguments against it would be revived.

First to lash out against this bill is our contemporary, "Chick" E. Lewis, publisher of *Showmen's Trade Review*, who, in an editorial titled "Up Pops the Neely Bill," warns the exhibitors not to "let anyone, including master minds, tell you that you have a doggoned thing to gain from theatre divorcement. The vast majority of exhibitors we have spoken with regarding divorcement have been most emphatic in stating their preference for the present set-up with the larger national circuits in their present hands, rather than having those same circuits taken over by non-affiliated organizations operating on a large scale—or even on a scale not so large as the national affiliated circuits now operate."

Elsewhere in his editorial, "Chick" speaks sarcastically of the "master minds" who had no small part in the agitation for governmental action "to bring on federal legislation which endowed the theatre owners with that back-breaking monstrosity known as the Consent Decree." According to "Chick," this fight for governmental action, started by the "master minds," was a "dirty trick," which brought about a selling plan that could only react to the detriment of the exhibitors.

Who are these "master minds" he refers to? Surely, "Chick," who claims to have the welfare of the exhibitors at heart, should have put them on their guard against those who would saddle them with harmful decrees and legislation.

Moreover, if "Chick" believes that the exhibitors have nothing to gain from theatre divorcement, what would he suggest that they do in order to be relieved from the monopolistic grip of the theatre-owning producers? And if to seek legislation for the correction of industry evils is to play a "dirty trick" on the exhibitors, what other workable remedy would he offer? Surely, a remedy is needed, for he himself admits that the Consent Decree is a "back-breaking monstrosity" that is detrimental to the interests of the exhibitors.

"Chick's" editorial is clear on one point—he is definitely against theatre divorcement. He should have made clear also whether or not he was satisfied with industry conditions before the "master minds" agitated for governmental action, and whether or not he is satisfied with conditions now.

"Chick" Lewis is entitled to his opinion, but in expounding it there was neither necessity nor propriety in his stooping to sarcasm. No doubt he tried to prove his point, but since he stated no facts, his argument has little weight. From what we can make of his statement, it is a conglomeration of insinuations, innuendoes, and name calling, without name-naming or constructive suggestions.

SEEKING THE VIEWPOINTS of the senior officers of the two national exhibitor organizations, *Film Daily* invited Abram F. Myers, general counsel for Allied States Association, and Ed Kuykendall, president of the M.P.T.O.A., to comment on the Kilgore divorcement measure. Their replies follow:

MYERS: "Support to be accorded the Kilgore bill will be considered by Allied Board August 11 and 12. Immediate action is not called for as Congress shortly will recess for six weeks. Theatre divorcement is a standing policy of Allied and was reaffirmed in a resolution on May 6 last. The board then informed the Attorney General divorcement constituted the only adequate remedy. I personally feel hearings on the bill next fall, coinciding with expiration of test period of consent decree, would develop defects of consent decree and reveal the mystery surrounding its negotiation and entry."

KUYKENDALL: "The Neely bill is just as wrong as ever. It is unworkable and does not make sense in this industry. Any inspiration must come from misguided individuals. We cannot operate under its provisions. Sane-thinking exhibitors, everywhere, though abused by trade practices, oppose it. Let's keep our balance, now of all times. I cannot believe the Department of Justice approves this bill, written in malice and spite."

Ed Kuykendall's castigation of the Kilgore measure does not come as a surprise; as president of a producer-controlled exhibitor organization, he has no alternative but to protect their interests. The M.P.T.O.A. has long been used by the theatre-owning producers to "muddy the waters," so that the public might be confused, and to battle the independent exhibitors' efforts for the correction of industry evils.

As this paper has frequently stated, the industry will never find peace until the producer-distributors are deprived by law from owning theatres and competing directly with their customers. Such legislation is, as Mr. Myers says, the only adequate remedy.

* * *

THIS PAPER HAS OFTEN stated that, when it comes to national issues, both the unorganized exhibitors and the unaffiliated exhibitor organizations stand by Allied. Proof of this is the action taken by the Allied-Independent Theatre Owners of Iowa-Nebraska, Inc., an unaffiliated organization, which, according to *Film Daily*, has advised the Attorney General that it "fully concurs with and lends its unanimous support to the report of the general counsel to the Allied States Association board of directors dated April 30 and the resolution adopted by the board on May 6 in the matter of the motion picture consent decree."

Discussing the Consent Decree in a bulletin to his membership, Leo F. Wolcott, president of this unaffiliated organization, said in part:

"The National exhibitor groups have already drawn up amendments they are hopeful of having included in any extension. These . . . cover a lot of territory, from M.P.T.O.A.'s full-line selling to Allied's 12-picture (UMPI) plan, with cancellations. Let it be known we, in common with the Pacific Coast groups, and others, favor the Allied plan and are fervently hopeful the Department of Justice will this time listen to and be influenced by the exhibitors, who after all are the ones most affected. . . . Amen!"

"Mexican Spitfire's Blessed Event" with Lupe Velez and Leon Errol

(RKO, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

As in the other pictures in the "Mexican Spitfire" series, this one, too, depends for its laughs on the dual antics of Leon Errol as "Uncle Matt" and "Lord Epping"; it will probably please the ardent followers of the series, as well as those who have never seen one of the other pictures. Others, however, may find it tiring, because of the repetitious doings. This time a misinterpreted telegram, indicating that Lupe had become a mother, sets off the complications. There is the usual confusion as a result of "Uncle Matt's" impersonating "Lord Epping." The comedy, which is of the slapstick variety, is quite silly:—

Walter Reed visits Lord Epping (Leon Errol) at his Canadian lodge to get his signature on an advertising contract. His plans are upset by the arrival of Hugh Beaumont, a rival advertising solicitor, who urges Epping to think the matter over. Reed receives a telegram from Lupe Velez, his wife, informing him of a "blessed event." Unaware that Lupe was referring to her pet tiger, Reed thinks he has become a father. Delighted, Lord Epping suggests that they leave immediately for the Arizona resort where Lupe was staying. At the hotel, Reed's Uncle Matt (Leon Errol) learns the truth. Realizing that Lord Epping intended to sign the contract in the baby's name, Uncle Matt persuades Lupe to act as nurse-maid to a guest's baby, and to lead the others to believe that the baby is her own. The scheme works. Beaumont, however, learns of the deception, and seeks to inform Lord Epping. Uncle Matt disguises himself as Epping and listens to Beaumont's complaint. Beaumont eventually discovers that he had been speaking to Matt, and calls in the sheriff to handle matters. After much confusion, in which Lord Epping is mistaken as the imposter, all charges are dropped at Lord Epping's request. Reed finally gets the contract when Lupe announces that she was really going to become a mother.

Charles E. Roberts and Dane Lussier wrote the screen play, Bert Gilroy produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Hers to Hold" with Deanna Durbin and Joseph Cotten

(Universal, July 16; time, 93 min.)

This is a highly entertaining romantic comedy-drama, by far an improvement over the recent pictures in which Deanna Durbin has appeared. It is the sort of film that will be enjoyed by most audiences, for it has a few heart-tugs, a load of laughs, and pleasant music. Maturity has added to the personal charm of Deanna, and the picture makes the most of her singing and acting abilities. Moreover, she is cast in an appealing role. While the basic theme of the story is not novel, the characterizations are fresh, and the dialogue is witty. Joseph Cotten, as the flirtatious aviator with whom Deanna falls in love, is good. Charles Winninger, as Deanna's absent-minded father, provokes much laughter with his antics. A good deal of the action has been photographed at the Vega aircraft plant, giving the spectator an idea of the workings of a huge plane factory:—

While awaiting his army commission, Joseph Cotten, an aviator, supervises plane tests at an aircraft plant. At a Red Cross Blood Bank, Cotten and Gus Schilling, his pal, meet Deanna Durbin, wealthy debutante. Posing as a doctor, Cotten obtains her telephone number and address. That night Cotten and Schilling "crash" a party at Deanna's home, where Charles Winninger and Nella Walker, her

parents, were celebrating their wedding anniversary. Deanna, aware that Cotten was a fake doctor, decides to have some sport with him. She asks him to diagnose the imaginary ailments of one of her guests. Thoroughly discomfited, Cotten admits the deception. Before the evening is over, however, Deanna and Cotten are very much in love. Deanna secures employment at the plant so as to be near Cotten. She becomes a great favorite with the workers, because of her singing to them during their lunch hour. When one of Deanna's fellow workers faints on the job after receiving word that her husband had been killed in action, Deanna becomes aware that some day she, too, may face a similar tragedy. She pleads with her father to seek a deferment for Cotten, but Winninger convinces her that Cotten would resent his interference. Meanwhile Cotten, too, had been upset by the incident; he had just been notified to report to the air force, and he did not want Deanna to worry about his safety. For this reason, he deliberately picks a quarrel with her, and makes it appear as if his love had grown cold. Schilling, however, learns the truth, and manages to bring the lovers together before Cotten departs for the front.

Lewis R. Foster wrote the screen play, Felix Jackson produced it, and Frank Ryan directed it. The cast includes Ludwig Stossel, Samuel S. Hinds, Iris Adrian and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Petticoat Larceny" with Ruth Warwick and Joan Carroll

(RKO, no release date set; time, 61 min.)

This is one of those harmless little program comedies that may amuse the family trade and juvenile audiences. Choosy patrons will find it boring, because the action is so far-fetched. For instance, Joan Carroll, an eleven-year-old youngster, convinces three thieves that she herself is a thief, and they allow her to join the gang. Joan, who is the central figure of the story, is capable, but she is deserving of better material. Ruth Warwick, as Joan's aunt, has little to do. There is a fair amount of comedy, as well as some excitement toward the finish when Joan is rescued from a gang of kidnappers:—

Tired of the poor crime stories her script writers turned out for her radio program, Joan Carroll, eleven-year-old radio star, decides to live in the underworld to obtain authentic material. Without the knowledge of Ruth Warwick, her aunt and guardian, Joan slips out of her house in the early hours and meets up with Tom Kennedy, a burglar. Joan makes it appear as if she had just committed a robbery, and offers to share her valuables with the thief. Kennedy takes her to his room where Vince Barnett and Jimmy Conlin, his confederates, agree to let her join the gang. Joan informs them that her "father," was a convict named "Foster." Meanwhile, Walter Reed, Joan's press agent, fearing that she had been kidnapped, has difficulties with the police; they believe his story is part of a publicity stunt. The crooks become fond of Joan, and decide to reunite her with her "father." They trace a convict named "Foster," and raise enough money to get him out of jail. Alone with her "father," Joan informs the convict of the truth. Sensing his opportunity, the convict really kidnaps her. Reed traces Joan to the three crooks, and they join him in a hunt for the child. Through the crooks' underworld connections, Reed learns that she is held prisoner on a gambling ship. With their aid, Reed rescues her. Joan rewards her three friends with parts on her radio program.

Jack Townley and Stuart Palmer wrote the screen play, Bert Gilroy produced it, and Ben Holmes directed it.

"Follies Girl" with Wendy Barrie, Doris Nolan and Gordon Oliver

(Producers Releasing Corp., July 26; time, 70 min.)

In its intended market, this comedy with music should prove acceptable as a supporting feature. It is somewhat amusing in spots, but, for the most part, the routine treatment and the trite dialogue tend to tire one. The musical and dance numbers, which are of the popular variety, should be a big help in selling the picture to the younger crowd. In addition to different specialty numbers, there is one sequence where Johnny Long, Ray Heatherton, Bobby Byrne, and Ernie Holst, well-known band leaders, get together for a "jam session." Proper exploitation of their names may help at the box office:—

When Wendy Barrie, a costume designer, loses her job, Doris Nolan, burlesque queen and Wendy's friend, induces William Harrigan, her producer, to stage a super-burlesque show with costumes designed by Wendy. The show is a sensation, and Wendy's work comes to the attention of J. C. Nugent, her wealthy former employer. Gordon Oliver, Nugent's son, accidentally sees his father with Wendy and, noting his interest in her, misunderstands. He determines to break up the "affair." Keeping his identity secret, Oliver manages to make a date with Wendy. He falls in love with her after learning that his father's interest was purely professional. Wendy, however, eventually discovers Oliver's identity and, stung by his obvious suspicions, refuses to see him. There follows the usual romantic complications with Wendy and Oliver effecting a reconciliation in the end.

Marcy Klauber and Art Jarrett wrote the screen play. William Rowland produced and directed it. The cast includes Cora Witherspoon, Lew Hearn and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Submarine Base" with Alan Baxter, John Litel and Fifi D'Orsay

(Producers Releasing Corp., July 20; time, 65 min.)

Poor direction and amateurish acting reduce this program war melodrama to a moderate entertainment. It starts off pretty well, but as it develops the story becomes confused and one loses interest. Moreover, the action is lacking in suspense. It is unfortunate that the producer, with more talent and star names than is usual for a picture in this bracket, did not turn out a better job:—

Alan Baxter, a former gangster wanted for murder, operates from an island off the shipping lanes, secretly selling torpedoes to German submarines. While out on one of his so-called fishing trips, Baxter rescues John Litel, sole survivor of a torpedoed ship, and takes him to the island. Litel, a former New York policeman, who knew of Baxter's record, becomes suspicious of the gangster's income; Baxter was in the habit of giving expensive parties for the island's inhabitants at a local hotel. Moreover, he had given Litel money for his maintenance. Litel uncovers evidence that leads him to believe that Baxter was dealing with the Nazis. He keeps a close watch on Baxter, and trails him to a secret cove where he sees a Nazi submarine loading torpedoes. Aware that he had been discovered by Litel, Baxter plans to leave the island. Litel, however, catches up with him. Cornered, Baxter admits that he had sold torpedoes to the Nazis, but reveals that he had outfitted each torpedo with a bomb timed to explode within a few hours after it had been loaded on the submarine racks. Baxter's statement is overheard by George Metexa, a Nazi agent, who shoots the gangster. Mortally wounded, Baxter dies, content in the thought that he had atoned for his shady past.

Arthur St. Clair and George Merrick wrote the screen play, Jack Schwarz produced it, and Albert Kelley directed it. The cast includes Eric Blore, Iris Adrian, Luis Alberni and others.

Not for children.

"For Whom the Bell Tolls" with Gary Cooper and Ingrid Bergman

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 168 min.)

Excellent! The magnitude of this production, the vast amount of publicity it has received since its inception, and the fact that there is a ready-made audience of millions, who have read Ernest Hemingway's novel, waiting to see it, should make it one of the screen's greatest box-office attractions.

Except for the elimination of episodes that are censorable, the film follows the book closely in plot. The sleeping bag, which gave the novel some of its choice passages, is shown, but in a discreet manner. As a matter of fact, the sex implications throughout the film have been handled inoffensively. While the picture avoids political controversy as regards the Spanish Civil war, it is made clear that the principals are Loyalists fighting against Fascism.

The High Sierra Mountains of Northern California, which make up the backgrounds, are enhanced by the Technicolor photography, but, at times, this color work gives the facial features of the characters a grotesque appearance.

The outstanding feature of the film is the picturesque characters. Gary Cooper as Robert Jordan, an American college professor who joined the Loyalists because of his belief in their cause; Ingrid Bergman as Maria, a Spanish waif who had been defiled and orphaned by the Fascists; Katina Paxinou as Pilar, a rugged Spanish woman, to whom the guerrilla band looks for leadership; Akim Tamiroff as Pablo, Pilar's husband, whose drunkenness and wavering loyalty presents a problem for the others; Joseph Calleia as El Sordo, a philosophical guerrilla who laughs at death; Vladimir Sokoloff as Anselmo, the old guide who aids Jordan with his sabotage work—all are colorful, and each gives a memorable performance. Miss Paxinou and Akim Tamiroff are particularly effective in their roles.

The story, which takes in four days in the lives of the guerrilla band, begins with Jordan's arrival at their mountain hideout, for the express purpose of dynamiting a mountain bridge at the exact hour that a Loyalist offensive starts. There he meets and falls in love with Maria. Pablo argues against the dynamiting for fear that the Nationalist troops will hunt him out of his retreat, but Pilar, realizing that the blow will help the Republic, obtains the support of the band. Many difficulties present themselves, but eventually Jordan succeeds in blowing up the bridge, in time to delay a counter-attack by the enemy. Mortally wounded while attempting to escape, Jordan instructs Maria to accompany Pilar and the surviving members of the band. To help them escape, he turns his machine gun on the enemy's advancing cavalry troops in a rear guard action.

The closing scenes are extremely exciting and filled with suspense. Other impressive sequences are the fight on a mountain top in which El Sordo makes a gallant stand against overwhelming odds until he and his four men are wiped out; the refusal of Pablo to become provoked when one of his men seeks to kill him in a fight; and the flashback sequence when Pilar recalls that Pablo was once brave and ruthless, and tells of the retaliatory measures he had taken against the Republicans whenever he captured them.

The romance between Miss Bergman and Gary Cooper is both touching and appealing. Their parting at the finish is a heart-rendering scene.

The picture has, however, one chief fault, to which the many minor faults can be traced. And that fault is its excessive length. There is entirely too much talk, tending to weary the spectator. It could certainly benefit by some judicious cutting.

Dudley Nichols wrote the screen play, and Sam Wood produced and directed it. Buddy G. DeSylva is the executive producer. The cast includes Arturo de Cordova, Mikhail Rasumy, Fortunio Bonanova, Victor Varconi, Alexander Granach, Frank Puglia, Feodor Chaliapin and many others.

Adult entertainment.

"The Falcon in Danger" with Tom Conway and Jean Brooks

(RKO, no release date set; time, 73 min.)

Although the story unfolds in an unbelievable way, and has many loose ends, this latest of the "Falcon" program pictures should satisfy the followers of the series, as well as those who are not concerned about lack of logic in a plot as long as the action moves at a fast pace. The story keeps one guessing as to the murderer's identity, and in the end it turns out that he is the one least suspected. Some laughter is provoked by Tom Conway's romantic difficulties, and by the usual antics of the inevitable dumb detective:—

When a big airliner makes a crash landing at an airport, and nobody is found aboard, Police Inspector Cliff Clark and Ed Gargan, his aide, are baffled. At the urging of Elaine Shepard, Tom Conway, famous private detective, decides to investigate. Clarence Kolb, Elaine's father, and his secretary, were known to have been aboard the plane, carrying a fortune in securities. Both Elaine and Jean Brooks, the secretary's niece, had received mysterious ransom notes warning them to keep the police out of the affair. Conway cleverly traces the notes to Felix Basch, an antique shop dealer, who demands ransom money for the return of Kolb. The police, who had trailed Conway, arrive to arrest Basch, but the radio announces that Kolb had returned home safely. At Kolb's home, the millionaire explains that mysterious bandits aboard the plane had stolen the securities, and had forced him and his secretary to bail out. Shortly afterwards, the bodies of Jean's uncle and the plane's pilot are found. Conway's investigation discloses that Richard Davies, Elaine's fiance, was indebted to Basch, who used the kidnapping scheme to compel Elaine to pay Davies' debt. Conway learns also that Jean, too, was in love with Davies. Different clues lead Conway to believe that Jean was implicated in the affair, but he eventually becomes convinced of her innocence. Through careful deduction, and with Jean's help, Conway uncovers evidence proving that Kolb himself had murdered both his secretary and the pilot to avoid exposure as a swindler. Kolb is shot dead while attempting to kill Conway.

Fred Niblo, Jr., and Craig Rice wrote the screen play, Maurice Geraghty produced it and William Clemens directed it. The cast includes Amelita Ward, Richard Martin, Eford Gage and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Sky's the Limit" with Fred Astaire and Joan Leslie

(RKO, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

A good comedy. The nice production values, Fred Astaire's dancing, the music, and the romantic interludes will suffice for the masses. The story is familiar; one overlooks this, however, for the performances are engaging, the dialogue sparkling, and the plot developments amusing. Joan Leslie is charming, and makes a capable dancing partner for Astaire. One of the most humorous sequences is where Robert Benchley, speaking at a dinner, makes a report on aircraft production. The music is tuneful, but none of the songs are outstanding:—

Home on furlough, Fred Astaire, a Flying Tiger hero, dons civilian clothes to avoid being pampered. He visits a swank night-club where he meets Joan Leslie, photographer for a magazine published by Robert Benchley. He learns that Benchley is in love with her. Astaire annoys Joan by getting into every photograph that she takes. Before the night is over, however, he walks home with her, and rents a room in the same rooming house. She takes a liking to him and, believing him to be an idler, she tries to get him a job. Astaire manages to foil her every attempt to put him to work, but does not reveal that he is a flyer. Eventually both fall in love, but Astaire learns that Benchley, too, wanted to marry Joan. Believing that a flyer has no business leaving broken hearts behind him, Astaire tries to further Benchley's suit. But the scheme does not work out, and he finds himself in Joan's arms. They plan to marry. On the eve of their marriage, Astaire receives his orders to report to a California airport. Tormented by the thought of Joan

being a "left-behind" wife, Astaire leaves her, leading her to believe that he did not love her. Benchley learns the truth, and takes matters in hand. He sends Joan on an assignment to California, with orders to photograph the departure of a squadron of bombers. This brings Joan and Astaire together again briefly. Astaire discards his scruples, and asks Joan to wait for him.

Frank Fenton and Lynn Root wrote the screen play, David Hempstead produced it, and Edward H. Griffith directed it. The cast includes Robert Ryan, Elizabeth Patterson, Marjorie Gateson and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Behind the Rising Sun" with Margo, Tom Neal and J. Carrol Naish

(RKO, no release date set; time, 87 min.)

Very good! Patterned after the style of "Hitler's Children," this drama effectively and intelligently depicts the political and religious philosophies of the Japanese people, who, dominated and guided by the militarists in power, dream of empire expansion and world conquest. As in the case of "Hitler's Children," this picture lends itself to exploitation; it should do very well at the box-office. The story, which is based on factual information contained in the book by James R. Young, Tokyo correspondent for International News Service prior to Pearl Harbor, revolves around an American-educated Japanese boy, who, though liberal-minded when he returns to his family in Tokyo, becomes a calloused individual, imbued with the Japanese ideology. His conflict with his father, and his turning against the girl he loves, accentuates the attitude of the Japanese, who place the army and the emperor above all. The film is relentless in its depiction of Japanese atrocities, such as the violation of Chinese women, and the torture inflicted on imprisoned Americans. One sequence—a battle between an American prizefighter and a Japanese wrestler—is particularly thrilling. George Givot, as a Russian secret agent, is responsible for some good comedy moments. The performances of the cast are good. Emmet Lavery, the screen play writer, and Edward Dmytryk, the director, have, as in "Hitler's Children," once again done a commendable job:—

Returning to Tokyo with an engineering degree from Cornell, Tom Neal, son of J. Carrol Naish, wealthy Japanese publisher, rebels when his father informs him that he must join the new order. Neal secures employment with Don Douglas, an American engineer, and falls in love with Margo, Douglas' Japanese secretary. When Japan begins her undeclared war against China, Neal is drafted into the Army. He goes to the front where the ruthless Japanese war methods convert him into a heartless brute. Neal returns to Tokyo in time to join a party given by Douglas in honor of Naish, who had been appointed Minister of Propaganda. Gloria Holden, an American newspaperwoman, joins the party and bitterly suggests that Neal bayonet a Chinese baby to amuse the guests. The incident leads to a quarrel between Neal and Douglas. Naish privately apologizes to Douglas for his son's behavior, and warns him to leave the country, because war with the United States is imminent. Meanwhile Margo takes Neal to visit her peasant family, and is shocked to learn that her parents had sold her younger sister into the Yoshiwara in order to obtain money with which to entertain Neal properly. Neal's promise to Margo to get her sister out is immediately forgotten when news of the Pearl Harbor attack is announced. He leaves to join his regiment. Douglas and Gloria are arrested as spies. Margo, too, is arrested, charged with having aided Douglas. All three are sentenced to death when Neal testifies against them. On the eve of their execution, American bombers raid Tokyo. Under cover of the excitement, Naish smuggles Gloria and Douglas to safety aboard a Portuguese boat. Margo elects to remain behind. Neal is shot down in combat with the American planes, and Naish, embittered over his son's ruin, commits hara-kiri.

The cast includes Robert Ryan, Adeline DeWalt Reynolds and others.

Not for children.

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No. 30

THE GOVERNMENT'S APPEAL IN THE CRESCENT CASE

A recent development in the Government's anti-trust suit against the Crescent Circuit is the Department of Justice's appeal to the U. S. Supreme Court asking that the decree handed down by Federal Judge Elmer D. Davies be remanded for a correction, which would prohibit Crescent from acquiring additional theatres in any situation where there is independent competition, unless it should first secure the permission of the U. S. District Court. Crescent and its affiliated circuits are cited to appear in Washington within forty days from Friday, July 16, "to show why the judgment rendered against them should not be corrected."

Indicative of the main reason for the Government's action in seeking a correction of the decree, is the following statement by Solicitor General Charles Fahy, which has been incorporated in the appeal:

"Experience under the temporary order in the Schine case and the consent decree entered in the New York equity suit has demonstrated that the problem of the widespread elimination of independent competition by the large circuits cannot be solved by action taken after the acquisition occurs. It is, as a practical matter, impossible to restore by decree of court a competitive situation after the competition in question has been eliminated by acquisition of the competitive theatre or theatres. Unless the Government is given the remedy which the Court in this case concluded that it was entitled to but rejected on administrative considerations, the Government believes that it will be unable to secure the continued existence of independent theatre competition which the Sherman Act contemplates."

By "rejected on administrative considerations," it is assumed that Fahy refers to Judge Davies' finding of fact, which stated: "This Court does not wish to be faced with the problem of having to make further decisions each time an exhibitor defendant might wish to acquire a theatre."

The Government's appeal petition, signed by Assistant Attorney General Tom C. Clark and Special Assistant Robert L. Wright, contends that the Court erred in failing to incorporate in the final decree a restriction upon the defendants' right to acquire more theatres—a restriction clearly justified by the Court's conclusions of law, and seemingly authorized by them. According to the petition, the Court, in entering the final order and decree, committed error to the prejudice of the Government in the following particulars:

"1. The Court erred in entering paragraph 19 of the final decree which reads as follows: '(19) That the exhibitor defendants, and each of them, be, and they hereby are, enjoined and restrained from acquiring a financial interest in any additional theatres, outside Nashville, Tennessee, in any town where

there is already located a theatre, whether in operation or not, unless the owner of such theatre should volunteer to sell same to either of the exhibitor defendants, and when none of said defendants, their officers, agents or servants are guilty of any of the acts or practices prohibited by paragraph nine (9) hereof.'

"2. The Court erred in declining to enter in lieu of said paragraph (19) of the final decree the provision contained in paragraph 29 of the proposed decrees submitted in accordance with the Court's conclusion of law No. 20, which provision reads as follows:

"That the exhibitor defendants, and each of them, be, and they hereby are, enjoined and restrained from acquiring a financial interest in any additional theatres outside of Nashville, Tenn. Except after an affirmative showing before this Court that such acquisition will not unreasonably restrain competition.'

"Wherefore, plaintiff prays that the final order and decree of the District Court granting the relief set forth in paragraph 19 thereof and denying relief in accordance with the Court's aforesaid conclusion of law No. 20 may be reversed and the cause remanded for the entry in lieu of said paragraph of a provision in accordance with said conclusions of law and for such other and fit relief as the Court may deem just and proper."

Since the filing of the appeal, the industry has been flooded with speculation as to the possible effects and implications that might result from calling upon the Supreme Court to review the case. HARRISON'S REPORTS, in accordance with its established policy, has obtained the opinion of competent counsel, and is now in a position to outline the situation as it really is.

In the first place, unless a cross-appeal should be filed by Crescent, the Supreme Court will not look into the merits of the entire case, but will limit its inquiry to the one question presented by the Government's appeal, namely, whether or not the decree should be modified by inserting the prohibition against further acquisition of theatres—and nothing more. And, while on the subject of cross-appeals, this paper believes that Crescent will not file any cross-appeal. The case seems to be too strongly in favor of the Government to hold forth much hope for a complete reversal. Hence, if Crescent should appeal, and thus ask the Supreme Court to examine into the entire case, the result might well be an affirmance of Judge Davies' decision relating to the violation of the anti-trust laws. In that event, the rulings pronounced by Judge Davies would be applicable not only to the Crescent situation, but also to the other pending anti-trust suits, as well as to competitive situations throughout the country. Crescent no doubt recalls and will profit by the Interstate Case, where the same thing occurred.

(Continued on last page)

"Appointment in Berlin" with George Sanders and Marguerite Chapman

(Columbia, July 15; time, 75 min.)

A satisfactory program espionage melodrama. The story unfolds in an interesting manner and holds the spectator's attention throughout. Moreover, it has some unique situations. George Sanders enacts the role of a British counter-espionage agent, who, after permitting himself to be branded a traitor, ingratiates himself with the Nazis and becomes a sort of "Lord Haw-Haw," ingeniously transmitting vital information in code through his anti-British broadcasts. He finds himself forced into precarious situations from which he extricates himself in clever fashion. The closing scenes are most exciting; in addition to being dramatic and thrilling they have a tragic touch, for both the hero and heroine meet death. The romance between Sanders and Marguerite Chapman, sister of a high-ranking Nazi, has appeal:—

Resentful over the Munich pact, George Sanders, Commander in the RAF, voices his criticisms, thus causing his dismissal from the service. Alan Napier, British Intelligence official, believes in Sanders and engages him as a counter-espionage agent. In the course of his work, Sanders meets and courts Marguerite Chapman, sister of Onslow Stevens, head of a Nazi spy ring operating in London. Sanders gains Stevens' confidence and, to settle a gambling debt, agrees to bring the Nazi leader plans of a secret bomb. By arrangement with Napier, Sanders obtains the plans, but he is apprehended while turning it over to German agents. He is sentenced to prison. Upon his release, Sanders is contacted by Stevens, and he travels to Berlin where he begins speaking over the short-wave radio as the "Voice of Truth." Although Sanders' broadcasts were strongly anti-British, in reality, he was transmitting to British Intelligence code messages given to him by Gale Sondergaard, who, too, was a British agent. After giving Sanders a message revealing Nazi plans for the invasion of Britain, Gale, whose identity had been discovered, commits suicide. Sanders, unable to transmit the message because his broadcast had been cancelled, knocks Stevens unconscious and changes into his uniform. Marguerite, in love with Sanders, escapes with him to Holland. But the Gestapo catches up with them, and Marguerite is shot dead by her brother. Sanders, however, manages to steal a Nazi plane and radios his message to England. A squadron of RAF planes take off to destroy the invasion fleet. Sanders, in order to light the target for the British, plummets his plane into an oil tank. He is posthumously decorated for valor.

Horace McCoy and Michael Hogan wrote the screen play, Samuel Bischoff produced it, and Alfred E. Green directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Danger! Women at Work" with Patsy Kelly and Mary Brian

(Producers Releasing Corp., Aug. 23; time, 58 min.)

In spite of the fact that the story is far-fetched, this program comedy has enough laughs, fast action, and amusing situations to satisfy undiscriminating audiences in small-town and neighborhood theatres. Discriminating patrons may find it a bit too inane. The theme is topical and the story has some fresh angles, but neither the director nor the players took full advantage of what the material offered:—

Patsy Kelly, Mary Brian, and Isabel Jewell, gasoline station attendants, enter the trucking business when Patsy's uncle dies, leaving her a ten-ton truck on which two payments were still due the finance company. In need of money with which to meet the payments, the girls advertise for business. They accept an assignment from a gang of gamblers to transport their equipment to Las Vegas. Meanwhile the finance company, because of the overdue payments, obtains

a court order to seize the truck. The girls, however, manage to get away before the truck can be seized. On the trip to Las Vegas they pick up several hitchhikers, including Betty Compson, a crystal gazer; Cobina Wright, Sr., a society matron who suffers from amnesia and imagines that the interior of the truck is her drawing room; and Wanda McKay, daughter of a millionaire, who had run away to marry the man of her choice instead of the man her father had selected. Complications set in when the girls are followed by rivals of the gambling gang, seeking to hijack the equipment; the finance company's men, seeking to seize the truck; detectives seeking a reward for finding Wanda and the society matron; and the girls' truck-driving boy-friends, seeking to protect them from harm. The police finally catch up with the girls and, after a night in jail, a country judge clears them of charges ranging from kidnapping to transporting of gambling equipment. It all ends up in a triple wedding ceremony, uniting Patsy and Warren Hyner; Mary and Allan Byron; and Wanda and Michael Kirk. The society matron regains her memory after receiving a blow on the head from Patsy.

Martin Mooney wrote the screen play, Jack Schwarz and Harry D. Edwards produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Spotlight Scandals" with Frank Fay and Billy Gilbert

(Monogram, Oct. 1; time, 73 min.)

Frank Fay and Billy Gilbert emerge as a good comedy team in this diverting comedy with music. Although there is nothing novel either in the story or its treatment, it should serve fairly well as a supporting feature. Added to Fay's smooth delivery of gags, and Gilbert's blustering antics, are a number of specialty acts headed by Bonnie Baker, who sings a few popular tunes. The Radio Rogues' impersonations of famous stars are good. The orchestras of Henry King and Herb Miller provide the music:—

Frank Fay, a stranded actor, and Billy Gilbert, a small-town barber, combine their comedy and vocal talents to form a vaudeville act, and eventually become headliners. Harry Langdon finances and stars them in a lavish show, installing Iris Adrian, his girl-friend, as featured dancer. Iris takes a fancy to Fay, but he ignores her advances. When the show closes after a lengthy and successful run, Bonnie Baker, singer in a night club and on a radio program advertising her mother's (Betty Blythe) bubble gum, invites Fay to join her on the radio program. He refuses, however, when Bonnie and her mother decline to engage Gilbert. Gilbert, who had accumulated a modest fortune, learns that Fay, who lived on a high scale, was without funds. To induce him to accept Bonnie's offer, Gilbert deliberately informs Fay that he had decided to form his own act. Fay, angry and disappointed, accepts the radio engagement. Bonnie's fondness for Fay irks Iris, and one night both girls fight over him. Fay separates them and takes Bonnie home. Returning to his penthouse, he finds Iris, intoxicated, waiting for him. While he rebuffs her, she loses her balance, and dies in a fall to the street. Fay is arrested for manslaughter. Unknown to Fay, Gilbert mortgages everything he owns to pay for his defense, transmitting the money through the act's former agent. Fay is acquitted, but his reputation as a performer is ruined. Gilbert, his funds gone, forms an act with Billy Lenhardt and Charles K. Brown, his young sons. The act is a flop until Fay, seated in the audience, comes onstage and reunites with Gilbert in their old routine.

William X. Crawley and Beryl Sachs wrote the screen play, Jack Dietz and Sam Katzman produced it, and William Beaudine directed it. The cast includes Eddie Parks, James Bush and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Heaven Can Wait" with Don Ameche, Gene Tierney and Charles Coburn

(20th Century-Fox, July 23; time, 112 min.)

Lavishly produced and photographed in Technicolor, this Ernst Lubitsch production is a highly amusing comedy-drama; it should go over with the masses. The story is light, and many of the situations are familiar, but Lubitsch's deft direction, the sparkling dialogue, and good performances of the cast give the picture a breezy and enjoyable quality. The action, which takes place during the period from 1872 to 1942, revolves around the life span of a wealthy scion, and deals with his romantic escapades from the time of his adolescence to the time of his death, when, at the age of seventy, he still fancies himself a woman-charmer. Although the story is somewhat sophisticated, it has been handled in good taste; none of the situations are risqué. Charles Coburn, as the rascally grandfather who aids his grandson in his romantic and domestic difficulties, adds much to the entertainment values of the film:—

The story, which is episodic and unfolds in flashback fashion, opens with the arrival of Henry Van Cleve (Don Ameche) in the offices of Satan. To prove his eligibility for a passport to Hell, Henry relates to Satan the story of his life. From the day of his birth, women vied for his attentions. As an infant, his mother (Spring Byington) and grandmother (Clara Blandick) had many squabbles over him. At the age of fifteen Henry (Dickie Moore) had created a major disturbance within his family by appropriating his father's dress suit and taking his French nursemaid (Signe Hasso) to Delmonico's for a champagne supper. By the time his twenty-sixth birthday came around, Henry had become a confirmed playboy. He had changed his ways when Martha Strabel (Gene Tierney) came into his life. Although she was the fiancée of Albert Van Cleve (Allan Joslyn), his self-righteous cousin, Henry had persuaded her to elope with him, thus creating a family scandal. After ten years of married life, Martha had left Henry and returned to the home of her parents (Marjorie Main and Eugene Pallette); she had discovered evidence indicating that he had been unfaithful to her. But with his winning ways, and the aid of his grandfather (Charles Coburn), Henry had effected a reconciliation. As the years rolled by, Henry, at the age of fifty, found that his son (Michael Ames) had followed in his footsteps, having become involved with a chorus girl (Helene Reynolds). Although he had employed his best technique, Henry had failed in his attempt to buy off the girl with a small sum of money. He came to the realization that age had affected his way with women. Soon after celebrating their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary, Martha had died. Henry, a widower, still tried to find a little joy in life. On his seventieth birthday, Henry had become bed-ridden from indulging in too much pleasure. He passed away when a pretty nurse held his hand and raised his temperature. Satan, after hearing Henry's story, decides that he really had been harmless, and sends him to Heaven.

Samson Raphaelson wrote the screen play, and Ernst Lubitsch produced and directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Good Luck, Mr. Yates" with Claire Trevor and Jess Barker

(Columbia, June 29; time, 69 min.)

A moderately entertaining program melodrama with a topical theme. It starts off in an interesting manner, but peters out because of the weakness of the plot construction. Revolving around a boys' military academy instructor, who is rejected for military service, the story deals with his efforts to hide the truth from his former students so as not to disillusion them. It holds one's attention fairly well, because of the sympathy one feels for the hero, and because of the considerable heart interest. A good part of the action

has been filmed against the background of a modern shipyard, giving the spectator an idea of the immensity of ship construction methods. It is not until towards the end that some excitement occurs. There the hero extinguishes a fire and saves the life of a fellow worker. Although a newcomer, Jess Barker, the male lead, is a competent actor. There is some slight comedy relief, and the romantic interest is pleasant:—

Jess Barker, young instructor at a boys' military academy, is feted by the cadets when he leaves to join the army. Rejected because of an old ear injury, Barker is ashamed to return to the academy. Through Frank Sully, a soldier friend, Barker obtains employment at a shipyard, and goes to live at a boarding house operated by Henry Armetta. There he meets and falls in love with Claire Trevor, a woman-welder, whose father, Edgar Buchanan, was a foreman at the yards. Tom Neal, a welder and admirer of Claire's, takes a dislike to Barker. In order not to disillusion the cadets, Barker leads them to believe that he is in the army, arranging with Sully to send and receive letters at the camp. Meanwhile he has his ear injury treated by Dr. Albert Basserman, a German refugee, in the hope that he might pass the army's physical requirements. When the cadets visit the army camp and learn that Barker was unknown, the head of the school institutes a search for him. Detectives come to the boarding house to inquire about Barker, causing Neal to become suspicious. He searches Barker's room and discovers the cadets' letters addressed to the army camp. Neal spreads a rumor that Barker is a spy in cahoots with the German doctor, and inflames the shipyard workers. Angry, Barker seeks Neal out, and there is a grim fight between the two. During the tussle, a welding torch is knocked down, setting the ship on fire. Neal is caught in an open hatch and Barker, risking his own life, saves him and extinguishes the blaze. He becomes a hero in the eyes of his fellow workers, as well as the cadets at the school.

Lou Breslow and Adele Comandini wrote the screen play, David J. Chatkin produced it, and Ray Enright directed it. The cast includes Tommy Cook, Scotty Beckett, Rosina Galli and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Coastal Command"

(RKO, no release date set; time, 62 min.)

Produced in England by the Crown Film Unit, which made "Target for Tonight," this documentary is an equally effective dramatization of the RAF's Coastal Command, the exploits of which has received little publicity.

As in "Target for Tonight," the players who appear in the picture are made up wholly of men attached to the Coastal Command, the very persons who do the jobs they enact.

The interesting action revolves around a huge Sunderland flying-boat, named "T for Tommy," and its crew, and it depicts with typical British understatement the Coastal Command's function, which is the protection of convoys from attacks by Axis submarines and raiders, as well as the spotting, reporting, and trailing of other hostile forces.

The film has many tense and exciting sequences, among which are the destruction of a U-Boat; the crew's fighting off an attack by numerically superior German fighter planes; the stalking and bombing of an enemy pocket battleship; and a number of thrilling dog fights.

The cool efficiency of the men, and the fact that no attempt has been made to sentimentalize over their bravery, makes the film all the more impressive. The photography is good.

Ian Dalrymple supervised the production with the cooperation of the RAF and the British Navy. J. B. Holmes directed it.

As for the possible effects of the Government's appeal, the Supreme Court may do one of three things:

1. It may refuse to consider the question because of some technical reason. All appeals to the Supreme Court are subject to many technicalities governing form and procedure. Should any of the technical requirements be violated, the Court may refuse to go into the merits of the controversy. In that event, the Court's ruling would have no effect on either the industry or the other pending anti-trust suits.

2. The Court may refuse to grant relief to the Government by a direct holding that, under the anti-trust laws, the courts have no authority to prohibit the acquisition of theatres by the defendants. Such a decision would have far-reaching effects, because it would preclude the Government from attempting to bring about theatre divorcement through court action. The Government, as well as the exhibitors, would then have to look to Congress for this type of relief.

It should be noted, however, that there is yet another possibility: if the appeal should be dismissed, the Court may limit its decision exclusively to the facts found in the Crescent Case. Should this happen, the decision would have little, if any, effect on the other anti-trust suits, where the facts might be sufficiently different from those in the Crescent Case to warrant another attempt at theatre divorcement by court decree.

3. The Court may grant the relief asked for by the Government, in which case the decision would have enormously far-reaching effects, because it would leave open to exhibitors the choice of either congressional action or court action to bring about a divorcement of production from exhibition.

The method by which the Supreme Court may accomplish one of the aforementioned possibilities is relatively unimportant; it would be merely a matter of procedure. It may issue its own order; it may direct Judge Davies to modify his decree; or it may direct Judge Davies to hold further hearings in order to find a method of administering the prohibitions against theatre acquisition, thus eliminating the Judge's fear of "administrative considerations."

Thus, although there is the possibility that the present appeal may have no effect upon the industry whatever, there is a greater possibility that the Crescent Case may wind up with limitless implications as to the future conduct of business within the industry.

ONE-SIDED RATIONING

George R. Farnum, a former U. S. Attorney representing a group of independent exhibitors operating approximately two hundred theatres in New England, has sent to the War Production Board a letter urging an immediate investigation of the extent to which the major producer-distributors are deliberately withholding product.

Stating that the practice of consuming raw film stock for pictures that are not released on completion, but are hoarded for indefinite future release, is not in keeping with the object and spirit of the rationing rules, Mr. Farnum pointed out that this practice "is calculated to aggravate the abuses of monopoly"; artificially and drastically limits the supply of pictures necessary to enable independent exhibitors to operate; and gives the major producer-distributors an unfair advantage over independent exhibitors in bargaining for pictures, enabling them to demand and obtain unreasonable film rentals, thus requiring the exhibi-

tors to fix admission prices at a level that is unfair to the general public.

Elsewhere in his letter, Farnum requests that the W. P. B. require the producer-distributors to release hoarded pictures, and suggests that film stock not intended for pictures that will be released immediately shall be re-allocated to independent producers, to the end that the independent exhibitors be assured of a reasonable supply of product.

At this writing, it is reported that, although the W. P. B. officials have not yet received Mr. Farnum's letter, they were of the opinion that an investigation would be denied on the grounds that the W. P. B. is not concerned about whether or not finished film is released immediately or sometime in the future.

HARRISON'S REPORTS is in complete agreement with Mr. Farnum. The allocation of raw film stock is as important to the exhibitor as it is to the producer; without it, neither could operate. Rationing is not only a conservation measure, but also a system by which parties of different interests are supposedly assured of equitable treatment. Accordingly, it becomes the responsibility of both the producer and the W. P. B. to see to it that the exhibitor, who is definitely an interested party, receives a just share of the benefits to be had from the allocation of film. A just share, insofar as the exhibitor is concerned, means availability of finished product with which to operate his theatre, and film rentals that will give him a fair profit.

While the first-run houses in key centers are enjoying extended runs, thus lowering their normal product requirements, the same is not true of most of the small-town and neighborhood exhibitors, whose product requirements remain the same; either the extended playing time in the first-run houses has milked their districts of the extra attendance they might have enjoyed, or their limited patronage requires that they have a change of program a few times each week no matter how well a picture is drawing at the box-office.

The situation calls for a change in the system by which pictures are distributed. The establishment of additional first-run houses and the altering of clearance rules may alleviate the film-booking bottleneck caused by the extended runs in key cities. If necessary, first-run houses should be by-passed. No matter what new rules have to be adopted, the important thing is that so-called "A" product get to the subsequent-run exhibitor much faster than it is getting there now.

The producer-distributors know where they stand. They are told how much film will be allotted to them, enabling them to plan intelligently their production and distribution schedules. The exhibitor, too, wants to know where he stands. Planning his future programs is an essential part of the successful operation of his theatre. But with pictures made available at the discretion of the distributor, the exhibitor is at a disadvantage.

Under the present arrangement of film allocation, the independent exhibitor is at the mercy of the producer-distributors, who have yet to show judicious use of power. The allocation of film to the producer-distributors should carry with it a provision calling for release of the finished product within a reasonable period. Without such a provision, the exhibitor will be faced continually with an artificial product shortage, which, in turn, results in exorbitant film rental demands on the part of the distributors. For the W. P. B., or any other Government agency, not to concern itself with this problem, is to favor a few over the many.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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No. 31

HERE AND THERE

IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED that Producing Artists, Inc., a new motion picture producing company formed by Arthur Lyons and David L. Loew, will soon go into production on three features, the cost of which will be approximately one million dollars each. A contract providing for the delivery and distribution of these pictures during the 1943-44 season has been signed with United Artists. Within a few years, the company hopes to produce from ten to eighteen top-flight pictures annually.

According to Lyons, who is vice-president of the company, as well as head of an agency representing more than three hundred writers, directors, and players, chief among the objects of Producing Artists are the preservation of the careers of established artists, and the development of the careers of newcomers. The set-up provides for Producing Artists to function as a parent company, within which autonomous units headed by top film talent, including writers, directors, and players, will produce their own pictures on a profit-sharing plan. Each of the participating individuals will be given complete independence in the selection of stories and in the execution of production ideas. Also, each artist will be available to the entire industry, for each will have the right at all times to make outside deals.

This paper believes that Producing Artists, if it should carry out its expressed aims, will offer an opportunity for good writers to write powerful stories, and for capable producers, directors, and players to translate these stories into meritorious pictures, which will be profitable for all concerned.

The attitude of Hollywood has done much to discourage and choke off creative talent. Because they are shackled by the restrictions consequent to studio politics, many fine writers, producers, directors, and players have been unable to exercise their talents and ingenuity. Those with new ideas, whether established artists or newcomers, are not admitted easily into the production end of the business, for there still exist among the present heads of production some short-sighted executives who have built around themselves a protective wall that keeps the insiders in and the outsiders out.

Given an opportunity to display their individual talents, those with new ideas and those with outstanding ability may find this new producing company the means by which to hurdle Hollywood's wall.

HARRISON'S REPORTS congratulates Producing Artists, Inc., on its aims, and wishes it great success.

* * *

IN A RECENT BULLETIN to his organization's members, Pete J. Wood, secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, states that the "ever-

present problem of increased film rental will be one of the important matters discussed at the National Allied Board meeting to be held in Baltimore, Maryland, on August 11th and 12th, and in order that we have as much information as possible to guide us, won't you kindly cooperate by going over your books and letting us know, *as soon as possible*, how your film rental compares for the year ending June 30, 1942 with the year ending June 30, 1943."

Pete points out that, in the past year, many situations have enjoyed a large increase in box-office receipts and, in such instances, the film rental would be correspondingly higher than in the previous year. The information he seeks, however, is not the amount of film rental paid, but the ratio between film rental and gross receipts in each of the two years. The purpose is to determine how far rental costs have outstripped gross receipts within one year.

Whether or not you are a member of an affiliated Allied organization, you should send this information to Allied States Association, 729 Fifteenth St., N. W., Washington, D. C., for the success of Allied's fight against excessive film rentals will benefit every independent exhibitor.

To arrive at your percentages the following procedure is suggested. First put down your total gross receipts for the year beginning July 1, 1941 and ending June 30, 1942. Then determine the total film rentals that you paid to all the film companies during that period for features, shorts, newsreels and trailers. Then divide the amount of the total film rental paid. The resulting figure will be the percentage to be furnished Allied. You should do the same thing for the period beginning July 1, 1942 and ending June 30, 1943.

Remember, Allied does not want to know how much film rental you paid. It wants only the percentage figure representing the ratio between gross receipts and film rental.

* * *

IN AN EFFORT TO AID small-town exhibitors adversely affected by war-time conditions, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, at its recent conference of sales executives and sales managers in Chicago, appropriated, as an initial amount, a budget of \$125,000 to be used for exploitation and promotional aids to its customers in these affected areas.

While this aid to the hard-hit exhibitor is not a cure-all for his basic ills, it represents affirmative action of a commendable nature. Metro has again shown its willingness to help deserving exhibitors. It has gone beyond promises and declarations of policy; it has actually done something. The other distributors would do well to follow suit.

"Salute to the Marines" with Wallace Beery and Fay Bainter

(MGM, no release date set; time, 101 min.)

A fairly good war melodrama. It is a lavish production, photographed in Technicolor, but it lacks a fresh story. The Wallace Beery fans, however, should be pleased, for he is cast in a familiar role—rough and tough, but good-natured. Men in particular should be thrilled, for the story offers opportunities for plentiful action and thrilling situations. Moreover, it has a good share of comedy. The action takes place in the Philippines just prior to Japan's attack, and it revolves around Beery as a veteran sergeant-major, who, after being retired, fulfills his lifelong ambition to get into battle when he leads a group of Filipino natives in a heroic delaying action against the Jap invaders. The battle scenes are not only exciting, but also gory: they may prove a bit too strong for women. Fay Bainter, as Beery's wife, seems miscast. There is some romantic interest, but it is of no importance to the plot:—

Although a Marine for thirty years, Sergeant-Major Wallace Beery had never been in action; his duties were confined to the training of raw recruits, a task he excelled in. Against his will, Beery is ordered to the Zubib province in the Philippines to train Filipino recruits. Soon after, Beery learns that his battalion is sailing for China. He attempts to join them, but Ray Collins, his Colonel, orders him to return to his post. Peeved, Beery gets drunk, brawls with some sailors, and lands in the brig. All this happens just before he comes up for honorable discharge. But Marilyn Maxwell, Beery's daughter, induces the Colonel to keep Beery's confinement off his record. Following his honorable retirement, Beery accompanies his wife (Fay Bainter) and daughter to their home in a small village on the outskirts of Manila. He leads a quiet life until December 7, when Jap planes bomb the village. Reginald Owen, the village mayor, reveals himself to be a fifth columnist, and urges the natives not to resist. Beery, however, disposes of him with a blow, and induces the Filipinos to defend their country. Knowing that the Japanese objective was a bridge leading to Manila, Beery, with his wife at his side, organizes the Filipinos and holds off the invading Japs until regular troops arrive on the scene to blow up the bridge. The defenders are killed by Japanese bomber planes. The Congressional Medal of Honor, a decoration he had always coveted, is posthumously awarded to Beery.

George Bruce wrote the screen play, John W. Considine, Jr. produced it, and S. Sylvan Simon directed it. The cast includes Keye Luke, William Lundigan, Noah Beery, Sr., and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Young Ideas" with Mary Astor, Herbert Marshall and Susan Peters

(MGM, no release date set; time, 76 min.)

Pretty entertaining program fare. It is a domestic comedy, in which the marriage of Mary Astor, a popular fiction writer, and Herbert Marshall, a chemistry professor, nearly ends in divorce when Miss Astor's two 'teen age children by a first marriage oppose the match. The manner in which the youngsters lead Marshall to believe that their mother had many escapades before her marriage to him makes for many amusing situations. One such situation is where Marshall, in a notorious tavern banned by the college authorities, becomes intoxicated after scientifically deducing that he can out-drink Allyn Joslyn. The story itself is far-fetched and lacking in human appeal:—

When Susan Peters and Elliott Reid learn that Mary Astor, their mother, had married Herbert Marshall, a college professor, they determine to break up the marriage in order to save their mother's writing career. They come to live with their new father, and enroll as students at the college. Re-

membering that their mother once wrote a book about gay life in Paris, in which she described a number of questionable women, Susan and Elliott lead the professor to believe that the book was autobiographical. In addition, they arrange with George Doblentz, a French student, to visit with their mother, and inform Marshall that he is carrying on a flirtation with her. Relations between Mary and Marshall become strained. Meanwhile Susan falls in love with Richard Carlson, a young professor and, realizing what love meant, asks Elliott to stop interfering with their mother's marriage. By this time, however, Mary had left Marshall, and had filed suit for divorce. To rectify matters, Susan and Elliott visit the Judge on the day of the trial, both dressed in children's clothes. They plead with him to bring their parents together, lest they become "waifs of divorce." They inform the Judge that the marital difficulties between their parents were caused by the fact that Mary used all the hot water for her baths. When Mary and Marshall are admonished by the Judge, they soon realize that they had been victimized. They chase the children out of the court house.

Ian McLellan Hunter and Bill Noble wrote the screen play, Robert Sisk produced it, and Jules Dassin directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Honeymoon Lodge" with David Bruce, June Vincent and Harriet Hilliard

(Universal, July 23; time, 63 min.)

A moderately entertaining program farce with music. The story revolves around a young couple who, on the verge of divorce, decide to re-enact their courtship in the hope that they will forget their differences. While not exactly original, the story does have its amusing moments, some of which are of the slapstick variety. Following the usual Universal pattern for pictures of this type, song and dance numbers have been inserted without relation to plot. The music is provided by Ozzie Nelson and his orchestra, and the songs by Harriet Hilliard, Ray Eberle, and Bobby Brooks, a colored youngster with a pleasing high-tenor voice. Ballroom dancing by Veloz and Yolanda, and tap dancing by Tip, Tap, and Toe, round out the specialty numbers. The film serves to introduce June Vincent and David Bruce, newcomers, who handle the leading roles satisfactorily:—

Because of their respective idiosyncracies, David Bruce and June Vincent, successful playwrights, find themselves in a divorce court. They sheepishly get together during a court recess and, eager to resume their marital status, agree to go to the Sierra Vista Hotel, a mountain resort, to re-enact their meeting, courtship, and marriage. June sees Bruce off on the train and then leaves by auto for the hotel—just as they did when they first met. On the train, Bruce meets Harriet Hilliard, a singer en route to the hotel. A prankster had hung a "Just Married" sign on Bruce's coat, and the passengers believed that they were newlyweds, despite their denials. To make matters worse, they occupied the upper and lower berths in the same section. Meanwhile June, while motoring to the resort, gives a lift to Rod Cameron, a handsome young rancher, whose car had broken down. Cameron falls in love with her. June arrives at the hotel just in time to notice Harriet greet Bruce in an over-friendly manner. To add to her anguish, one of the guests, who was a passenger on the train, informs her that Bruce and Harriet are married. Resentful, June ignores Bruce. He makes many attempts to see her, but Cameron, unaware that Bruce was her husband, prevents him from doing so. The situation eventually becomes unbearable, and Bruce starts a fight with Cameron. It all ends up in a country town police court where Cameron drops assault and battery charges when he learns that Bruce is June's husband.

Clyde Bruckman wrote the screen play, Warren Wilson produced it, and Edward Lilley directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"I Dood It" with Red Skelton and Eleanor Powell

(MGM, no release date set; time, 101 min.)

This combination of music, dancing, and comedy is highly entertaining; it should please all types of audiences. The antics of Red Skelton have never been funnier; he reaches new heights as a comedian. One sequence that will provoke side-splitting laughter is where Skelton, before a make-up mirror, puts on a beard; it is one of the finest bits of pantomime ever brought to the screen. There are other situations that are equally as funny. The dance numbers, led by Eleanor Powell, are spectacular and lavish. One in particular, a lariat-spinning, tap dancing routine, is outstanding. There is additional entertainment and marquee value in the presence of Jimmy Dorsey's orchestra, which provides the music; Lena Horne and Ray Eberle, who sing a few numbers; and Hazel Scott, who plays the piano. The popularity of these entertainers should be of considerable help at the box-office. The story, which has a spy angle, is very thin and nonsensical, but it serves its purpose as a framework for Skelton's antics:—

"Because of his adoration for Eleanor Powell, a dancing star, Red Skelton, pants presser in a hotel tailor shop, dresses in borrowed clothes and follows her everywhere she goes. Eleanor eventually takes notice of him, but considers him as just a harmless playboy. When Richard Ainley, with whom she was in love, jilts her for Patricia Dane, Eleanor marries Skelton to spite him. She misinterprets one of Skelton's remarks, and believes that he owns a gold mine. Happy over his good fortune, Skelton rents the bridal suite in the same hotel where he worked. The following morning, Thurston Hall, Eleanor's producer, visits the newlyweds and seeks to induce Skelton to back his new show. Just then Sam Levene, Skelton's employer, enters the suite and inadvertently reveals that Skelton is a pants presser. Eleanor leaves him. Levene resents this. He gives Skelton a pep talk, outfits him with new clothes, and sends him to the theatre to demand his wife. Backstage, Skelton becomes involved with a saboteur, who planned to blow up a warehouse next to the theatre. Skelton knocks the spy unconscious and, after a frantic search for the hidden bomb, discovers it five seconds before it explodes. He becomes a hero, and Eleanor sinks into his arms.

Sid Herzwig and Fred Saidy wrote the screen play, Jack Cummings produced it, and Vincente Minnelli directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Someone to Remember" with Mabel Paige and John Craven

(Republic, release date not set; time, 80 min.)

Pleasant program fare. This is a charming sentimental drama of a little old lady who lives on in the hope that her prodigal son will some day return to her. It has heart interest, lovable characterizations, and bits of delightful comedy. The action is slow-paced, but it is in keeping with the story's tempo and does not diminish one's interest. Mabel Paige, by virtue of her pleasing personality and expert acting, makes the film entertaining. The production values are good. There is pleasant romantic interest:—

When the local university buys an old apartment house for the purpose of turning it into a boys' dormitory, all the tenants, except Mabel Paige, a dignified old lady, vacate the premises. Charles Dingle, building superintendent of the school, learns that Miss Paige had an unbreakable lease, and that she lived there in the hope that some day her errant son, who had been expelled from the university years previously, would return. Miss Paige continues to live in her apartment all through the alteration work. When the students occupy the building, her charming manner endears her to them; they treat her like a little queen. One night Dorothy Morris, a young miss, climbs the fire-escape and, by mistake,

enters Miss Paige's apartment. She explains that she was looking for John Craven, a freshman, with whom she had quarreled earlier that evening. Miss Paige is thrilled at hearing Craven's name, for it was the same as that of her son; she hoped that he might be her grandson. Without revealing her thoughts, Miss Paige takes an interest in Craven, hoping pathetically that Craven's father is her son, and that he might one day visit the school. Dorothy, Craven, and Miss Paige become fast friends. She helps the two youngsters overcome the objections of Russell Hicks, Dorothy's father, and they marry. Miss Paige arranges for them to live in her apartment. One evening a wire arrives announcing that Craven's father would visit him on the following morning. The excitement proves too much for the old lady, and that night she dies. Only then does Harry Shannon, an old cab driver, reveal that her son had died in prison twenty years previously, but she had never known it.

Frances Hyland wrote the screen play, Robert North produced it, and Robert Siodmak directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Watch on the Rhine" with Bette Davis and Paul Lukas

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 114 min.)

Excellent! As a stage play, Lillian Hellman's "Watch on the Rhine" was hailed by the critics and the public as a great production. The scope of the screen has made it even greater. Produced with care, acted with sincerity by a capable cast, the picture offers entertainment that mass as well as class audiences will enjoy. It is an emotion-stirring drama, the kind that is certain to draw tears. Word-of-mouth advertising should make it one of the year's outstanding box-office successes. Paul Lukas is superb; he gives a memorable performance as the German refugee who devotes his life to the fight against fascism. Equally effective is Bette Davis as his loyal, American-born wife, who, despite privations, gives up position and wealth to help him in his work. Some of the situations bring a lump to the throat. One in particular is where Lukas, compelled to abandon his wife and children because of a murder he had committed, bids them goodbye. The devotion between Lukas and Miss Davis is appealing.

Briefly, this is the story. Lukas flees pre-war Germany with his wife and three children, and comes to the United States where he takes refuge in the Washington home of Bette's aristocratic mother. Other than knowing that Lukas was involved in European political affairs, Bette's mother did not know the true nature of his work. A penniless Roumanian Count, a guest in the house, learns of Lukas' underground activities and threatens to expose him to the German Embassy unless he is paid a large sum of money. Lukas, in order that he not be hampered in his work, slays the black-mailer. Bette's mother, understanding that the murder was one of necessity, gives Lukas sufficient time to say farewell to his family, and to get out of the country, before making a report of the killing.

Included among the other members of the cast are Lucille Watson as Bette's shrewd and witty mother, who learns to appreciate and understand the fight to maintain democracy; George Coulouris as the unscrupulous Roumanian Count, a tragic figure because of the realization that Geraldine Fitzgerald, his unhappy American wife, was deeply in love with Donald Woods, Bette's brother; and Donald Buka, Eric Roberts, and Janis Wilson as Bette's children—all give commendable support.

"Watch on the Rhine" puts over its message eloquently. The picture is a credit to Warner Brothers and the industry as a whole.

Dashiell Hammett wrote the screen play, Hal B. Wallis produced it, and Herman Shunlin directed it. The cast includes Beulah Bondi, Henry Daniell, Kurt Katch, Clyde Fillmore and others.

The film is best suited for mature-minded audiences.

"Melody Parade" with Eddie Quillan and Mary Beth Hughes

(Monogram, August 27; time, 76 min.)

An entertaining program comedy with music and dancing. It has been given better-than-average production values, and most of the individual performances are good. But not much can be said for the story, which is extremely silly and at times tiresome. The action takes place in a night-club, which provides the setting for the lively song and dance numbers. "Tim and Irene," of radio fame, take a prominent part in the action and are good for many laughs. Among those doing specialty number are Armida, Jerry Cooper, the Morgan Boys, and the Ruloff trio. In addition, there is the pleasant singing of Mary Beth Hughes. The music is furnished by Anson Weeks and his orchestra. Obviously included for marquee value is Ted Fiorita and his orchestra, who play one number; this brief appearance may prove disappointing to their followers:—

When his financial backer dies, Tim Ryan, night-club owner, is faced with bankruptcy. Eddie Quillan, busboy and would-be agent, tries to get an audition for Mary Beth Hughes, the club's hat-check girl, but Ryan is in no mood to listen to her singing. Ryan is visited by Irene Ryan, scatter-brained grandniece of his former backer. The night-club owner assumes that she had inherited her grand-uncle's fortune, and that she would finance the club. Actually, Irene's Aunt was the heir. Ryan succeeds in holding off the creditors, and Quillan sells Irene the idea of engaging Andre Charlot, Broadway impresario, to revamp the show. After Charlot's arrival, Irene's financial status is found out, and the creditors threaten to close the club once again. But Irene receives an offer of two million dollars for one of her granduncle's inventions and, on the strength of this offer, the creditors allows the club to remain open. Quillan and Irene want Mary to sing in the show, but Armida, the singing star, has a contract prohibiting other female singers. Quillan, with the aid of Manton Moreland, a colored porter, manages to get Armida intoxicated, and Mary is called upon to sing in her place. She is hailed by the critics, and the show is an outstanding success. A telegram arrives for Irene withdrawing the two million dollar offer. But Ryan, on the road to prosperity, refuses to be downhearted.

Tim Ryan and Charles Marion wrote the screen play, Lindley Parsons produced it, and Arthur Dreifus directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Here Comes Kelly" with Eddie Quillan and Joan Woodbury

(Monogram, August 20; time, 64 min.)

Audiences who are not too discriminating will enjoy this program comedy. Although the story is thin, it is entertaining and holds one's attention, because of the amusing situations and steady action. Eddie Quillan, as a cocky young man with an uncontrollable temper, makes the most of his role; he provokes much laughter by the predicaments he gets himself into. Sidney Miller and Maxie Rosenbloom contribute to the comedy. Quillan, though a militant sort, makes of himself a likeable character. There is some romance.

Much to the disappointment of Mary Gordon, his mother, and Joan Woodbury, his sweetheart, Eddie Quillan is unable to hold a job, because of his ungovernable temper. On the advice of Ian Keith, a lawyer for whom Joan worked, Quillan resolves to study law, but the idea soon peters out. With the aid of Sidney Miller, his pal, Quillan becomes a process server. He becomes involved with Armida, a night-club singer, on whom he serves a summons, thus causing a rift between Joan and himself. Moreover, Quillan resented the attentions paid by Keith to Joan. Quillan and Miller are sent to work for the district attorney on an oil investigation, and are delegated to serve subpoenas on "Trixie Bell" and a mysterious "No. 7." "Trixie Bell" turns out to be Maxie Rosenbloom, a gangster, who, while intoxicated, reveals that "No. 7" is none other than Keith, Joan's employer, who headed the oil swindlers. Learning that Keith and Joan were leaving for Montreal on a business trip, Quillan rushes down to the railroad station, arriving in time to save Joan from Keith's improper advances, and to serve the summons on the swindler. The following day, as Joan and Quillan prepare to get married. Quillan receives his induction notice. Knowing that Quillan never held a job for more than two months, Quillan's mother assures Joan that the war will soon be over.

Charles R. Marion wrote the screen play, Linsley Parsons produced it, and William Beaudine directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Headin' for God's Country" with William Lundigan and Virginia Dale

(Republic, August 12; time, 78 min.)

In spite of the fact that the story is far-fetched and, in many spots, inconsistent, this program outdoor melodrama with a war angle should get by with the action fans. The scene is an Alaskan village, and the action, which takes place immediately before Pearl Harbor, revolves around a mysterious young stranger who perpetrates a war hoax on the unfriendly natives, thus causing them to organize defense preparations that eventually enable them to fight off a Japanese raiding party. The closing scene, where the Japs are beaten, are exciting. It has a good sprinkling of comedy, and the performances are good:—

When William Lundigan appears mysteriously in Sunivak, an isolated Alaskan village, the few white inhabitants resent his presence; supplies, which arrived twice a year, were limited. Lundigan, who did not talk, was suspected of having struck a rich claim. Virginia Dale, who operated the local weather station, and Harry Davenport, the town barber and printer, befriend Lundigan, and save him from being sentenced as a vagrant. Virginia's radio receiving set, the only one in town, is put out of commission when Harry Shannon, cannery owner and secret axis agent, steals the tubes. As a result, the town is cut off from the outside world. To get even with the residents for having treated him badly, Lundigan, using Davenport's printing press, fakes a copy of a Seattle newspaper announcing that the United States was at war. A furor of defense preparations begins immediately, much to Lundigan's amusement. Incensed at Lundigan's unpatriotic behaviour, the residents want to jail him, but he saves himself by pointing out grave defects in their preparations. Meanwhile, known only to Shannon, Japan had attacked Pearl Harbor. Eventually, the townspeople learn of Lundigan's hoax, and he leaves town to save himself. In fleeing, he comes upon a Japanese raiding party, led by Shannon, headed for the village. He races back and, after some difficulties, convinces the villagers that he was telling the truth. With the aid of American planes, which Virginia had summoned by radio, the villagers annihilate the Japs.

Elizabeth Meehan and Houston Branch wrote the screen play, Armand Schaefer produced it, and William Morgan directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"What's Buzzin' Cousin?" with Ann Miller, Freddy Martin and "Rochester"

(Columbia, July 8; time, 75 min.)

A tiresome comedy with music; at best, it is suitable for the lower half of a double bill. The popularity of Ann Miller, Eddie "Rochester" Anderson, and Freddy Martin's orchestra may help at the box-office, but most patrons will find it a boring entertainment, because of the inanity of the story, the trite dialogue, and the undistinguished music. In spite of the fact that the title indicates otherwise, the music and dancing are not of the "jive" variety; this may prove disappointing to the "jitterbug" trade. "Rochester" gives the film a few amusing moments, but for the most part his talents are wasted on unfunny gags. No fault can be found with Ann Miller's dancing:—

Taking along Rochester (Eddie Anderson) as handyman, Freddy Martin and his orchestra travel to New York by trailer. They run out of gas in a ghost town, and spend the night in a deserted hotel. The following morning, Ann Miller, Leslie Brooks, Jeff Donnell, and Carol Hughes arrive to claim the hotel. Ann had inherited the property and the girls had pooled their savings to pay off the debts, intending to operate the hotel. Shocked at learning that the hotel was in a ghost town, Ann is dejected. John Hubbard, wealthy singer with the band, offers to help. He redecorates the hotel at his own expense, and persuades Martin to stay on. Business is poor until Rochester discovers a gold nugget while digging a victory garden. Hubbard publicizes the incident, and the town comes to life. Meanwhile Bradley Page, a gangster, plots to gain control of the property. One day, while Hubbard is away, he succeeds in buying the property from the girls, over Ann's protests. Hubbard, believing that Ann had double-crossed him, quarrels with her. She returns his investment, and leaves him. A few days later, Hubbard discovers that the gold nugget Rochester had found was his own tooth-filling. Hubbard, realizing that he treated Ann unjustly, sings to her over the radio, and wins back her love.

Harry Sauber wrote the screen play, Jack Fier produced it, and Charles Barton directed it. The cast includes Theresa Harris, Warren Ashe and others. Morally suitable for all.

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AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERY EXHIBITOR TO DO HIS PART

A current bulletin issued by Allied States Association announces that, prior to the Board of Directors' meeting to be held in Baltimore on August 11 and 12, a special committee named by President M. A. Rosenberg will meet in Washington to discuss fully the latest developments in connection with the Consent Decree and, if possible, to confer with the Department of Justice relative thereto. The committee will make a report of its discussions to the Board at the Baltimore meeting.

The bulletin points out that the Consent Decree will occupy a prominent place in the agenda for the Board meeting. The program calls for a progress report on the work of the Caravan; a report by Roy E. Harrold on 16mm and non-theatrical competition; a report by Jack Kirsch on juvenile delinquency as it affects the theatres; a report on the Kilgore divorcement bill; the latest reports from independent exhibitors in Canada as to their experiences under the price ceiling; a proposal for an enlarged bulletin service; reports from the several territories on the effects of the print shortage and curtailed delivery service; the hoarding of pictures by certain distributors; and a report on the excessive rental and percentage terms demanded for current releases.

The directors will discuss also the adoption of a sales plan for submission to the Department of Justice. At the last Board meeting held in Detroit on May 6, a resolution was adopted in favor of theatre divorcement fortified by effective injunctions against unfair practices. The resolution added that, if the Attorney General should be unable to proceed with the case for any reason, he should be furnished with suggestions for modifications of the Decree along the lines recommended by Abram F. Myers, Allied's General Counsel.

The bulletin explains that the report submitted by Myers at the Detroit meeting was lacking in some details, particularly with reference to a selling plan. The omission was intended to give the directors time to confer with their members. Now, however, the details of a sales plan have been worked out by the member organizations of Allied, and they will be presented by the directors at the forthcoming meeting.

With the trial period of the Consent Decree drawing to a close, the decisions that will be reached by Allied's Board of Directors are of the utmost importance to every independent exhibitor; the Board's recommendations to the Department of Justice may play a big part in shaping the Department's attitude

toward prosecution of the suit against the major distributors.

That such recommendations will be given deep consideration is indicated by the procedure adopted recently by Tom C. Clark, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Government's suit. Clark has ordered the regional representatives of the anti-trust division to contact independent exhibitors in their individual territories, in an effort to learn what effect the Consent Decree has had on their business operations, and to learn their views on future Government procedure. The information Clark seeks is in addition to the reports and recommendations he expects to receive from national and regional exhibitor organizations. Clark, on a recent visit to some of his division's regional offices, had occasion to discuss the Decree with different exhibitor organization officials, as well as with a few independent exhibitors. Through the survey conducted by his field offices, he hopes to have a thorough and complete picture of exhibitor reaction before discussing the Decree with the heads of the major distributors.

As pointed out by the daily trade papers, the procedure followed by Clark is in sharp contrast to the procedure followed by Thurman W. Arnold, his predecessor, who was in charge of the Government's suit at the time the present Decree was drafted: Arnold accepted the exhibitors' views, but he did not solicit them as Clark now is doing. Moreover, at the time the Decree was drafted, the exhibitors' suggestions and recommendations were ignored.

There has never been a time when exhibitors had a better chance to combat the monopolistic practices of the producer-distributors. Tom Clark, by his actions, has indicated his willingness to give the independent exhibitors a voice in whatever procedure the Government decides to follow in November. In order that the Government's case be strengthened, Clark must have information as to the abuses the producer-distributors have practiced over a period of years, and as to the effect the Consent Decree has had upon the exhibitors.

Take advantage of Clark's offer to listen to your complaints. If you do not know where in your district the regional office of the anti-trust division is located, write to Hon. Tom C. Clark, Department of Justice, Washington, D. C., and he will notify you. Then go to this regional representative and give him whatever information you have. Don't leave it to the other fellow to do the talking. Only by united action on the part of each and every exhibitor can the arbitrary practices that have bound you these many years be brought to an end.

"Let's Face It" with Bob Hope and Betty Hutton

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 76 min.)

Good. Bob Hope romps through this picture in his usual comical fashion, provoking laughs with his wise-cracking dialogue, and with his clowning. The film offers little in the way of a novel story and, as a matter of fact, many of the situations creak with age, but, with Hope's gags and antics, they manage to be highly amusing. Hope is aided by Betty Hutton, who sings a few songs, one of them in her inimitable bombastic style. The closing scenes, where Hope misdirects a Nazi U-boat by placing a mirror next to its periscope, are hilarious:—

In order to obtain enough money to marry Betty Hutton, Private Bob Hope accepts an offer of two hundred dollars from three middle-aged women (Zazu Pitts, Eve Arden, and Phyllis Povah) to spend the week-end with them at a summer home in Southampton. The women suspected their husbands (Raymond Walburn, Andrew Tombes, and Arthur Loft) of philandering, and hoped to arouse their jealousy. On the day of his date, Hope gets into difficulties with Sergeant Joe Sawyer. By offering two of his buddies (Dave Willock and Cully Richards) ten dollars each, Hope prevails upon them to help him escape from the guard-house, and to accompany him for the week-end. Betty learns of Hope's plans and, together with Marjorie Weaver and Dona Drake, girl-friends of Hope's buddies, follows him. Complications arise when the philandering husbands arrive with three flashy girl-friends, followed closely by Betty and her friends. In the row that follows, the flashy girls depart, and the others split up in two groups—the husbands with Betty and her friends, and the wives with Hope and his buddies. All go to a seashore cabaret, seeking to make each other jealous. There Hope is discovered by Sawyer. Feigning insanity, he jumps through a window, followed by his buddies. They commandeer a rowboat and head for camp. En route, the periscope of a Nazi submarine comes through the bottom of the boat. With the aid of a mirror placed next to the periscope, Hope misdirects the submarine and forces it to run aground. Hope becomes a hero, but Sawyer sees to it that he finishes his guardhouse sentence.

Harry Tugend wrote the screen play, Fred Kohlmar produced it, and Sidney Lanfield directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Girl Crazy" with Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland

(MGM, no release date set; time, 97 min.)

A fairly good comedy with music and dancing; it should do better-than-average business, because of the popularity of the leading players. Based on the 1931 stage play of the same title, the story has been changed considerably. But this is for the better; the stage production was racy. Neither has the story any resemblance to the RKO version of the play, produced in 1932 with Wheeler and Woolsey. This version is a wholesome entertainment, tailored to fit the individual talents of Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland. It has youthful romance, elaborate dance numbers, and enjoyable Gershwin music sung by Judy and played by Tommy Dorsey's Orchestra. There is not much substance to the story, but it serves to hold the musical numbers together, and it gives Rooney an opportunity to indulge in his amusing antics. Nancy Walker and Rags Ragland contribute to the comedy:—

Because of Mickey Rooney's craze for girls, Henry O'Neill, his wealthy father, sends him to a western desert college, which enrolled men only. Mickey shows his dislike for the rough-and-ready routines of the college, but remains at the school, because of his love for Judy Garland, granddaughter of Dean Guy Kibbee. When news comes that the college is to be closed, because of a decrease

in the enrollment, Mickey rallies the students. He suggests that they stage a Rodeo, publicizing it nationally. Together with Judy, he visits the Governor of the state and talks him into giving them two months' time in which to raise the necessary number of enrollments. At a party for Frances Rafferty, the Governor's daughter, Mickey informs the debutantes that a Rodeo Queen will be selected at the Rodeo, hinting to each that she stands a good chance of winning. Each promises to attend. The Rodeo is a spectacular success, and the vote for Rodeo Queen is a tie between Judy and Frances. Mickey is called upon to name the winner. Thinking of the publicity involved, he names Frances. Judy accepts the decision in a sportsmanlike manner. The Rodeo is a huge success, and the following week applications arrive by the hundreds. The Dean and Mickey's father are shocked to find that most of the applications are from girls. The college is turned into a co-educational institution, in order that it retain its right to function.

Fred Finkelhoffe wrote the screen play, Arthur Freed produced it, and Norman Taurog directed it. The cast includes Howard Freeman, Gil Stratton and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Tartu" with Robert Donat and Valerie Hobson

(MGM, no release date set; time, 103 min.)

If one is willing to stretch the imagination, this incredible, British-made spy melodrama should satisfy. The action fans will certainly be delighted. Cast in the role of a one-man "blitz," Robert Donat crosses paths with the Nazis in Czechoslovakia and surmounts impossible odds in his destruction of a heavily-guarded poison gas plant. And to show further his utter disdain for the Nazis, he swipes a plane from under their noses and flies safely to England. But despite these "phoney" heroics, the story is loaded with suspense from beginning to end, and it holds one's interest throughout. Robert Donat's performance is very good:—

Because of his knowledge of foreign languages, and his training as a chemical engineer, Robert Donat is selected by British Intelligence to demolish a Nazi poison gas factory near Pilsen. Donat proceeds to Rumania where, with the aid of British agents, he assumes the identity of a dead Rumanian Iron Guardist. He convinces a German Consul that he is wanted by the Rumanian police, gaining for himself a safe-conduct pass to Czechoslovakia. In Pilsen, the Nazis put Donat to work in an armament factory as an inspector, and arrange for him to board at the home of Phyllis Morris and Glynis Johns, her daughter. There he meets and falls in love with Valerie Hobson, who, too, was a boarder. Valerie, a favorite with high-ranking Nazi officers, was, in reality, an underground leader. When the death of a Nazi officer is traced to Glynis, Donat furnishes an alibi for her. This gives him an opportunity to reveal his identity, and he asks the grateful girl to put him in touch with the underground. Valerie learns of the incident, and decides to speak to her colleagues. The following day at the plant, Glynis is executed for an act of sabotage. Circumstances lead Valerie to believe that Donat was responsible for Glynis' death, and that he is a Nazi, posing as a British spy. Furious, she plots against him. Meanwhile Donat manages to secure a position in the gas factory. He eventually makes contact with the underground and, with their aid, smuggles explosives into the plant. On the day set for the explosion, Valerie learns that Donat is a British spy, and that the Germans were aware of his identity, because of her interference. She rushes to the factory to warn him. He successfully blasts the plant and makes his getaway. Valerie and Donat steal a German bomber from a field nearby, and fly to England.

John Lee Mahin and Howard Emmett Rogers wrote the screen play, and Harold S. Bucquet directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"This Is the Army"

(Warner Bros., August 14; time, 114 min.)

Excellent. This screen version of Irving Berlin's "This Is the Army" is a dynamic entertainment in every sense of the word; from start to finish it stirs one's emotions deeply. There is no doubt that it will do smash business. It is the sort of picture that cannot fail to please, for it has everything—rousing patriotic appeal, sensational dancing, unforgettable music by Irving Berlin, tender romance, hilarious laughter, and tears. The production values are excellent, and Technicolor photography has never been employed to better advantage. Except for the elimination of certain skits and ballet numbers, the film presents the numbers performed in the stage production, including a few new numbers. The three hundred and fifty soldiers who appeared in the stage version, fill their original parts in the picture. Musically, the film is a treat. There are seventeen Berlin tunes, including such old favorites as "Poor Little Me, I'm on K.P." and "Oh, How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning," which is sung by Irving Berlin in one of the film's outstanding sequences. Current favorites are such tunes as "I Left My Heart at the Stage Door Canteen," "This is the Army, Mr. Jones," and "God Bless America," which is sung by Kate Smith. Other highlights include songs by Gertrude Neisen and Frances Langford; the "Ladies of the Chorus" number, sung and danced by Alan Hale and a soldier-chorus in feminine garb; a sensational Harlem dance number, in which Sgt. Joe Louis does a bag-punching routine; and the "Stage Door Canteen" number, in which the soldiers impersonate hostesses and famous stars. "Give a Cheer for the Navy," in which the Army salutes the Navy, and "This Time Will Be the Last Time," which is the finale, are two elaborately executed song and marching numbers that will long be remembered by the spectator.

Told in the terms of a father-son story, the film ties in "Yip, Yip, Yaphank," soldier show of World War I, with "This is the Army," soldier show of World War II. It opens in 1917 in New York, where George Murphy, dancing star of the Ziegfield Follies, receives his draft notice. At Camp Upton, Murphy meets Charles Butterworth, a musician, George Tobias, an East Side fruit peddler, and Alan Hale, a tough top-sergeant. For the benefit of Army Emergency Relief, Stanley Ridges, the commanding officer, sanctions a soldier show, and puts Murphy in charge. The show is called "Yip, Yip, Yaphank." It is a huge hit, and at the end of its successful Broadway run, it is disbanded and the men go overseas. When the Armistice is declared, the men return and settle down to civilian life. The outbreak of World War II finds Murphy a theatrical producer, with Lt. Ronald Reagan, his son, as his assistant. Tobias, now the proprietor of a swank fruit store, is aided by Sgt. Julie Oshins, his son. Butterworth is assisted in his music store by Joan Leslie, his daughter. Joan and Reagan are engaged to be married. Reagan and Oshins enlist and are sent to Camp Upton where they, too, just as their fathers did, have Hale for a Sergeant. When the members of the "Yip, Yip, Yaphank" cast come to visit their sons, they prevail upon the commanding officer to let the boys stage a show. The commander agrees, and the new show is titled "This is the Army." With Murphy to guide him, Reagan is put in charge of production. The show is a tremendous hit in New York, and a nation-wide tour is arranged. The finale of the show comes at the Washington, D. C. command performance for the President. At the close of the performance, Reagan and Joan are married in the theatre alley.

"This is the Army" is a fine tribute to the Army, and to Irving Berlin. Also, it is a tribute to the patriotic motives of Warner Brothers, which is contributing all receipts over and above its actual outlay and distribution costs to the

Army Emergency Relief Fund. Credit is due Michael Curtiz for his excellent direction.

Casey Robinson and Capt. Claude Binyon wrote the screen play, and Jack L. Warner and Hal B. Wallis directed it. The cast includes Dolores Costello, Una Merkel, Rosemary De Camp, Ruth Donnelly, Dorothy Peterson, Ilka Gruning, M/Sgt. Ezra Stone, Sgt. Philip Truex, Pfc. Joe Cook, Jr., the Allon Trio, and many others.

Definitely suitable for all.

"The Man from Down Under" with Charles Laughton, Binnie Barnes, Richard Carlson and Donna Reed

(MGM, no release date set; time, 102 min.)

Combining action, drama, human interest, and a good share of comedy, this melodrama shapes up as a fairly good entertainment, in spite of the fact that the story is transparent. It is not, however, strong enough for single-billing. The film's chief asset is Charles Laughton's colorful portrayal of a boastful but likeable Australian. Its chief fault is the listless development of the plot in between the first and last few reels. But even in that stretch, one finds some amusing comedy situations. Two of the film's outstanding sequences are a prizefight, in which Richard Carlson wins the Australian championship, and a hand-to-hand battle, in which Carlson and Laughton best a downed Japanese air crew. Youthful romance is furnished by Carlson and Donna Reed in contrast to the middle-aged romance between Laughton and Binnie Barnes. Some judicious cutting would benefit the film:—

Australian soldier Charles Laughton embarks for home in 1919, taking with him two Belgian orphans, brother and sister. In his haste, he forgets his promise to marry Binnie Barnes, a cafe entertainer. In Sydney, Laughton becomes a famous pub-owner, and raises the boy (Richard Carlson) as a boxer. He sends the girl (Donna Reed) to a girls' finishing school. Carlson wins the Australian championship, but injures his shoulder in the fight. The injury ends his fighting career. Laughton buys a country hotel with his winnings, taking Donna and Carlson to live with him. Binnie Barnes, now a wealthy widow, visits the hotel. Seeking revenge for Laughton's treatment of her, she manages to win the hotel from him in a gambling game. Meanwhile Horace McNally, an American newspaperman, had fallen in love with Donna, much to the chagrin of Carlson, whose feelings for Donna were strong. Donna, however, did not love McNally. Realizing that his love for Donna was more than brotherly love, Carlson, after confiding to a friendly priest, goes away. War is declared, and the hotel is turned into a shelter for evacuated children. Laughton, too old for the army, joins a work battalion. Meanwhile Carlson, wounded in the Malayan campaign, returns to Australia at a point near the hotel. During a raid, in which the hotel is bombed, a Japanese plane is downed. The Jap crew, uninjured, take possession of the hotel. Laughton and Carlson rush to the rescue, wiping out the Japs in a fierce fight. Reunited, Donna's and Carlson's happiness is even more complete when the kindly priest, to whom Carlson had confided, reveals that an investigation of their parentage showed that they were foster brother and sister, with no blood ties. But they are no happier than Laughton, who had won a Captain's commission, and Binnie, who had won Laughton.

Wells Root and Thomas Seller wrote the screen play, and Robert Z. Leonard produced and directed it. The cast includes Christopher Severn, Clyde Cook, Andre Charlot, Arthur Shields and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"We've Never Been Licked" with
Richard Quine, Noah Beery, Jr.
and Anne Gwynne**

(Universal, August 13; time, 103 min.)

It is evident that Walter Wanger meant to make this a thrilling and inspirational war melodrama of "A" classification, but it is no more than a fairly good program entertainment, one that could stand judicious cutting. Produced with the cooperation of Texas A & M College, which serves as the setting, the film depicts the university's traditions and the type of training it offers to its students, many of whom have become top-ranking officers in the U. S. Army. But all this is shown through a thin and trite story, which has been handled in a routine manner.

Like most stories dealing with service schools, this one, too, starts off with a "cocky" hero who defies the school's traditions. He is hazed thoroughly by the upper classmen, and decides to quit. But he has a change of heart after a "pep" talk by an old professor, who is a friend of the hero's father, one of the school's outstanding graduates. From then on the story is a highly implausible affair involving two Japanese student spies, who attempt to steal a secret formula entrusted to the hero by the old professor. The hero, feigning cooperation, convinces the spies that he is a Japanese sympathizer, and gives them a fake formula. Although he had the real formula in his possession, the hero leads the school authorities and the spies to believe that it had been lost in a laboratory fire. Eventually the school authorities suspect his movements. He is given an opportunity to explain, but for some reason, which the film never makes clear, he prefers to accept suspicion as a traitor. Together with the Jap students, he is expelled from school. He goes to Japan where, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, he becomes a sort of "Lord Haw-Haw," broadcasting anti-Allied propaganda to the United States. It all ends up in a blistering climax, in which the hero, given permission to broadcast a battle from a Japanese plane, kills the pilot, radios instructions to an American Air Squadron, and dives his plane onto a Jap plane carrier. He sets the ship on fire, thus helping the Americans to win the battle. All this is heroics in the usual impossible Hollywood manner.

The performances are good. Richard Quine is the misunderstood hero, and Noah Beery, Jr., is his tolerant roommate. Anne Gwynne forms the third part of a pleasant romantic triangle, with Beery winning her away from Quine. There are some amusing comedy situations caused by the upper classmen's hazing of Quine. The picture will require extensive exploitation to put it over, since the members of the cast mean nothing at the box-office.

Norman Reilly Raines wrote the screen play, Walter Wanger produced it, and John Rawlins directed it. The cast includes Samuel S. Hinds, Martha O'Driscoll, Harry Davenport and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Murder on the Waterfront" with
Warren Douglas and Joan Winfield**

(Warner Brothers, no release date set; time, 48 min.)

A very mediocre murder mystery melodrama. The plot is constructed poorly, and it is never convincing. For instance, numerous characters are suspected of having committed the crime, but, when the mystery is finally unravelled, the guilty one turns out to be a person the spectator had no reason to suspect. The story, which is a hodgepodge of illogical situations, takes place at a naval base and deals with the investigation by naval authorities of a murder committed on the base. The film tends to discredit naval men, for it depicts them as not being too bright in their handling of the investigation. The photography is poor, and so is the direction and acting. Its short running time should be taken into consideration before booking.—

The story opens with a group of performers arriving at a naval base to entertain the sailors. Among the performers are Joan Winfield, one-day bride of Warren Douglas, a sailor at the base, and Don Costello, a professional knife-thrower. During the show, Joan and Douglas go to a ware-

house, in an effort to have a few moments alone. There they discover the body of John Maxwell, inventor of a secret thermostat used by the Navy. A mysterious figure attacks the sailor and escapes. Naval authorities investigate the killing and deduce that the murderer was after the thermostat. The sailor and his bride are held as suspects. As the authorities go about their investigation, the mysterious person makes numerous attempts on their lives. Capt. William B. Davidson of Naval Intelligence enters the investigation. He reveals that Costello, the knife-thrower, is a former naval officer, discharged for brutality to his men, and that the murdered man had once been under his command. Costello is placed in the custody of First Officer Bill Kennedy, who secretly offers the knife-thrower his freedom. The offer is overheard by Joan. She accuses Kennedy of the murder. Kennedy attempts to murder her, but Costello arrives in time to kill him with a thrown knife. Capt. Davidson reveals that Kennedy was a Nazi agent, and that he had enlisted Costello's aid to prove the case.

Robert E. Kent wrote the screen play, and B. Reaves Eason directed it.

Adult entertainment.

**"Hi Diddle Diddle" with Adolphe Menjou,
Martha Scott, Dennis O'Keefe
and Pola Negri**

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 72 min.)

Although this is one of those sophisticated entertainments, in which there is little human interest and no sympathy is felt for the characters, it is a fairly good comedy-farce, strong enough to top a double bill. The action revolves around a sailor and his bride, who suffer many interruptions while trying to leave for their honeymoon. The story is completely nonsensical, but it moves at such a lively pace and so many of the situations are comical that one's interest is held throughout. There are no risque situations, but some of the dialogue is suggestive. The film marks the return of Pola Negri, who gives a very good account of herself as a glamorous and temperamental opera singer. There is an amusing cartoon sequence, in which caricatures on wallpaper, displeased with the rendition of a Wagnerian opera, flee:—

At the wedding of Dennis O'Keefe, a sailor, and Martha Scott, Billie Burke, Martha's mother, reveals that the family fortune had been lost. Barton Hepburn, Martha's ex-suitor, admits that he was responsible for Miss Burke's buying worthless stocks and losing her cash assets at a crooked gambling club. Hepburn hoped that the loss of the family fortune would cause O'Keefe to change his mind about marrying Martha. Adolphe Menjou, O'Keefe's father, promises to somehow retrieve the fortune. Menjou, a suave character, who lived by his wits, was married to Pola Negri, a jealous opera singer, to whom he looked for support. He goes to the gambling club and conspires with June Havoc, a singer, to fix the roulette wheel. June agrees for a share of the winnings. As the newlyweds start on their honeymoon, Menjou arrives and informs O'Keefe that he will need his assistance. O'Keefe, who had only forty-eight hours leave, balks, but he agrees to leave his bride for a few hours. He tells her that he has to leave on a secret government mission. While Menjou and O'Keefe win heavily at the roulette wheel, Hepburn, who, too, was at the club, arranges for Martha to come there. Meanwhile Miss Negri arrives at the club and suspects Menjou and June of intimacy. To forestall her suspicions, Menjou, who had never told her of his grown son, introduces O'Keefe as June's husband. Total confusion results when Martha arrives, but O'Keefe manages to straighten out matters. Returning home, the newlyweds are again interfered with when Martha, an air raid warden, is called to duty. After a few more incidents, in which they are kept apart, Martha and O'Keefe manage to get a few hours to themselves before his furlough is over.

Frederick Jackson wrote the screen play, and Andrew Stone produced and directed it.

Not for children.

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MULCTING AN UNSUSPECTING PUBLIC

"Her First Romance," a 1940 Monogram release, is being reissued by that company under the title, "The Right Man." The former title is noted properly on all the advertising matter.

When the picture was released originally, its leading players were billed as Edith Fellows and Wilbur Evans. The supporting cast included Jacqueline Wells, which was the film name used at that time by Julie Bishop, now a rising Warner Brothers' star. Included also in the supporting cast was Alan Ladd, then a newcomer.

HARRISON'S REPORTS' review of this picture early in 1941 stated that it was a pleasant program entertainment, lightweight in story and a bit improbable. Also that it served to give Miss Fellows an opportunity to play in her first grown-up part.

Under the new title, "The Right Man," the picture's press book and other exploitation matter give equal billing to Ladd, Miss Bishop, Miss Fellows, and Evans in the order named. Ladd's photograph, however, is featured prominently on all the advertising matter, and the phrases contained thereon are worded in a fashion to lead one to believe that the story revolves around him, as a two-fisted hero, with three women fighting for his love. Actually, it is a cinderella-like story of adolescent love, in which most of the action revolves around Miss Fellows, as a college girl victimized by Miss Bishop, her half-sister and guardian, who not only tries to keep Miss Fellows from having dates, but also attempts to snare Evans away from her. Ladd, cast in a secondary romance, plays a minor role.

The entire press-book matter, with the exception of a small biographical piece about Julie Bishop, deals with Ladd and his sensational rise to stardom. Except for a mention here and there, practically nothing is said about Miss Fellows and Evans, the principals. Even the synopsis of the story has been written in a fashion indicating that the action revolves around Ladd. Upon reading this synopsis, an exhibitor, who had neither seen the picture, nor read a review of it, remains with the impression that Ladd is the center of attraction.

Another thing carefully noted in the advertising matter is the fact that Edward Dmytryk, who directed the picture, directed also "Hitler's Children."

Monogram's motive in resurrecting this picture under its new title and with a switch in top billing is

obvious; it intends to "cash in" on the popularity of Alan Ladd, whom Paramount, through extensive exploitation campaigns, the most recent being in connection with "China," has built up into a great box-office attraction. As a matter of fact, the press book bluntly tells the exhibitors to "cash in," pointing out that Ladd is the "hottest name in pictures today," and "to hang every stunt you use on Ladd."

HARRISON'S REPORTS has frequently deplored the fact that certain producers and distributors, in a deliberate attempt to "cash in," often ride the coat tail of an extensive exploitation campaign by resurrecting an old picture and exploiting it in a manner designed to fool an unsuspecting public. That is exactly what Monogram is doing when it ballyhoos Ladd in a way that leads his many followers to believe that he plays a major part in a picture that is a "maelstrom of adventure and romance," which is the exact wording on one of the two-column ad mats. Enticed by this ballyhoo, Ladd's followers will rightfully feel that they had been cheated.

Equally deplorable is the fact that there are always enough exhibitors who become parties to unethical practices such as this one, thus alienating the good will of their patrons and hurting the industry as a whole.

The distributor who resurrects an old picture, and the exhibitors who book it, for the purpose of mulcting an unsuspecting public, may make a small short-lived profit, but they are bound to suffer in the long run from the ultimate reaction of their resentful patrons.

JUST A THOUGHT

A recent news item is to the effect that a Montreal, Canada, theatre owner is suing Earl Carroll, charging that his chorus girls not only were far from being "the most beautiful girls in the world," but also were without "any beauty or glamour whatsoever."

In a \$22,030 damage action, the theatre owner charged that he had lost \$7,030 during the time Carroll's company played his theatre, and that he did not realize an anticipated profit of \$15,000. Among other things, the theatre owner claimed that the acts were inferior and the performers ill-trained.

Without taking too seriously the possibility that this suit may be successful, just imagine what would happen if every exhibitor started a similar action against the distributors, each time he sustained a loss on the so-called big pictures. The court calendars would be jammed.

"The Good Fellows" with Cecil Kellaway, Helen Walker and Mable Paige

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 69 min.)

This satire on fraternal orders is a pleasing program entertainment; it will appeal to family audiences. While the comedy is not of the hilarious sort, it does keep one chuckling throughout, because of its wholesome humor. The action revolves around the head of a small-town lodge, whose fervent devotion to fraternal doings, interferes with his livelihood. Cecil Kellaway, as the Grand Caesar of the Ancient Order of Noblest Romans, is ideally cast; the predicaments he gets himself into provoke much laughter. Diana Hale, as Kellaway's understanding five-year-old daughter, is an appealing child:—

Because of his greater interest in his fraternal organization than in his own business, Cecil Kellaway continually finds himself in financial difficulties, and at odds with his family. Helen Walker, his eldest daughter, takes care of his real estate office, while he devotes himself to fraternal affairs. In spite of the fact that Helen needs his help to close a big real estate deal, Kellaway leaves for a lodge conclave in Toledo, where he hoped to be appointed national auditor at a salary of \$2,000 a year. During his absence, Helen is visited by James Brown, whose father, an unscrupulous banker, owned the property for sale. Brown arranges a dinner between his family and Helen's. At the dinner, Kellaway reveals that he failed to get the appointment, but that he had arranged for the national convention to be held in town, adding that he had bid \$6,750 for the privilege—a sum he had to raise. The banker, anxious to get rid of his property, much of which was under water, offers to join Kellaway's organization if he would sell the land. Kellaway, who had a buyer, agrees. He secures an advance commission so as to cover the convention money. When Kellaway meets the buyer and learns that he is a fraternal brother, he tells the truth about the property, and the deal falls through. The banker threatens Kellaway with arrest for securing an advance commission, and his family loses faith in him. To appease the banker, Kellaway offers to give him an orphanage building into which he had invested all his savings. The banker refuses. All turns out well, however, when the government takes a twenty year lease on the building, for use as an Army convalescent home. Kellaway pays his debts, pacifies his family, and has enough money left over to continue his organizational work.

Hugh Wedlock, Jr. and Howard Snyder wrote the screen play, Walter MacEwen produced it, and Jo Graham directed it. The cast includes Kathleen Lockhart, Wade Boteler, Olin Howlin and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Revenge of the Zombies" with John Carradine and Veda Ann Borg

(Monogram, September 17; time, 61 min.)

A moderately horrifying horror melodrama, suitable as a supporting feature in small-town and neighborhood houses on a mid-week double bill. The story, in addition to being far-fetched and thin, is familiar. Moreover, it is developed without a new twist. It may hold the interest of the ardent horror-picture fans, but others will find it tiresome. The usual tricks have been employed to create an eerie atmosphere, but even that fails to chill one:—

As a result of the mysterious death of Veda Ann Borg, his sister, at the family mansion in the bayou country of Louisiana, Mauritz Hugo, her brother, goes there, taking with him Robert Lowery, a detective, and Barry Macollum, his physician. At the mansion they meet John Carradine, scientist and husband of the dead woman. Carradine, who had perfected a device whereby he can turn human beings into zombies, had murdered his wife and transformed her into a zombie, but upon completion of the experiment had found that he was unable to control her brain. In reality

a Nazi agent, Carradine dreamt of a world empire made up of zombies. When Veda's body disappears mysteriously from her coffin, Lowery demands that the police be notified. Bob Steele, the Sheriff arrives, but unknown to the others, he is in league with Carradine. Lowery investigates Carradine's laboratory and comes across evidence proving that he is a Nazi spy. Confronted with this evidence, Carradine calls upon his small army of zombies to overpower Lowery. The detective is left to suffocate in a closet, but Manton Moreland, the family chauffeur, releases him. Meanwhile Carradine succeeds in drugging Hugo, and prepares to make a zombie out of him. The Sheriff, who reveals himself as an FBI agent, and Lowery, smash down the laboratory door in time to prevent the transformation. Once again Carradine calls upon his army of zombies to protect him. But Veda, who controls the zombies, commands them to bring Carradine to her. Veda drags him to the bayou, and together they sink into the mud. The rest of the zombies return to their graves.

Edmund Kelso and Van Norcross wrote the screen play, Linsley Parsons produced it, and Steve Sekely directed it. Not for children.

"The Saint Meets the Tiger" with Hugh Sinclair

(Republic, July 29; time, 70 min.)

This British-made melodrama is passable program fare, but it won't mean much at the box-office, for the players are practically unknown to American audiences. It is another in the series of adventures based on the activities of "The Saint," the famous fiction character created by Leslie Charteris. The film lacks the quality of those pictures, based on the same character, produced in Hollywood. Moreover, one senses from the beginning just how the story will progress and end. There is, however, plentiful exciting action and occasional comedy relief:—

Hugh Sinclair, feared as an enemy of crime, finds a dying man on his doorstep. The man's last words—"The Tiger," "gold," and "Bakum," arouses Sinclair's thirst for adventure. Discovering that Bakum is a small coastal village in Cornwall, Sinclair goes there with Wylie Watson, his cockney valet. Upon his arrival, he is interviewed by Clifford Evans, a local reporter. Actually, Evans was "The Tiger," whose sensational bank robbery of gold bullion had puzzled Scotland Yard. Sinclair makes the acquaintance of Jean Gille, a local girl, whose Aunt (Louise Hampden) invites him to tea. Among his fellow guests are Dennis Arundel, a notorious promoter, and Charles Victor, a shady gold mining expert. Also, Inspector Gordon McLeod, Sinclair's friendly enemy. When Sinclair discovers Arundel paying Jean a large sum of money for worthless gold stocks, he realizes quickly that "The Tiger's" gang intends to buy a defunct gold mine, export the stolen gold to Africa, announce a big gold discovery, and sell the metal at a high price on the open market. Believing the gold to be hidden in a cave, Sinclair enlists the aid of the curator of the local museum, only to find that he is a member of the gang. Teaming up with Inspector McLeod, Sinclair discovers the hidden cave and notices men transferring the gold to a yacht offshore. He rows out to the ship and finds that Jean and his butler had already subdued some of the crew members. He is trapped by Arundel, who reveals that he had double-crossed "The Tiger." Arundel is about to shoot Sinclair when Evans makes an appearance, reveals that he is "The Tiger," and shoots Arundel. He is in turn shot by Victor. When McLeod arrives with the local police, Sinclair reveals that he had been retained by the insurance company to find the gold.

Leslie Arliss, Wolfgang Wilhelm, and James Seymour wrote the screen play. William Sistrom produced it, and Paul Stein directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Adventure in Blackmail" with Clive Brook and Judy Campbell

(English Films, Inc., release date not set; time, 70 min.)

This British-made comedy-drama is a fair program entertainment, suitable mostly for high-class audiences, who enjoy good acting and novelty of plot. It stands its best chance in a small arty theatre that caters to those who seek something different in screen entertainment. The thick British accents, in addition to the subtle comedy, make it unsuitable for the masses. There are a few situations that have general appeal and provoke hearty laughter. Some of the dialogue is sparkling:—

Always interested in the unusual, Clive Brook, a successful playwright, is elated when Judy Campbell, a total stranger, greets him affectionately. His elation, however, changes to fury when, shortly thereafter, Judy sues him for an imaginary breach of promise. To back her claim, she produces in court love letters written by Clive and addressed to her name. Brook, realizing that the letters were originally addressed to the wife of his theatrical producer, whose name was the same as Judy's, courteously refrains from revealing the truth. He decides to call Judy's bluff and marry her. This turnabout confuses Judy, for she had planned the breach of promise suit out of revenge for a wrong she thinks Brook had done to her brother. Threatened with exposure by her lawyer, there is nothing she can do but marry him. Judy does everything possible to make life miserable for Brook. On the other hand, Brook, believing Judy to be a heartless blackmailer, is hardly civil to her. Eventually they separate. Soon after, she meets her brother and learns that Brook had actually helped him, instead of, as she thought, harmed him. Realizing her love for Brook, Judy returns to him. This time, Brook misjudges her; by coincidence, she returns on a day that he receives a large sum of money for one of his plays, and he refuses to believe that her only motive in blackmailing him was revenge for a fancied wrong. After a series of misunderstandings, Brook realizes that he is wrong, and that he, too, is in love. The pair meet in a theatre presenting Brook's new play, and they decide to make their strange marriage a real and permanent one.

Emeric Pressburger wrote the story, R. Norton produced it, and Harold Huth directed it.

Adult entertainment.

"Hostages" with Luise Rainer, Paul Lukas and William Bendix

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 88 min.)

A fairly interesting war melodrama. It is another one in the cycle of films dealing with the resistance by the undergrounds in Nazi-held Europe, offering nothing more than a rehash of everything that has been shown in similar pictures. Its box-office chances will have to depend on the popularity of the novel, from which the story is adapted, the drawing power of the leading players, and the willingness of patrons to accept a story—especially a war story—that is a carbon copy of that which they had seen before. While the performances are generally good, there is not one that is particularly outstanding. Another drawback of the film is its leisurely pace:—

As a result of a Nazi officer's death in a Prague cafe, the Gestapo rounds up twenty-six hostages, among whom are Oscar Homolka, wealthy Nazi collaborationist, and William Bendix, hulking lavatory attendant. Although definitely a suicide, Commissioner Paul Lukas and General Reinhold Schunzel, Gestapo chiefs, make it appear as if the officer had been murdered, thus enabling them to continue to hold the hostages, particularly Homolka; they wanted time to gain control of his fortune. The Prague underground, led by Arturo de Cordova, who avoided suspicion by collaborating with the Nazis, and Katina Paxinou, a bakerwoman, plot to effect Bendix's release. Unknown to his captors, Bendix was

the brains of the underground. Luise Rainer, Homolka's daughter, joins with the underground, at first in the hope that they will help free her father, and then in full support of their cause. To obtain Bendix's release, Cordova plans to publicly take the blame for the fictitious murder, but the plan is made unnecessary when Bendix escapes through a clever ruse. Shortly afterwards, Lukas makes the discovery that the man who had slipped through his fingers was the underground's leader. Suspicious of Cordova and Luise, Lukas summons them to his office and attempts to make them reveal Bendix's whereabouts by lining up the hostages, including Homolka, before a firing squad. Just then a band of patriots, led by Bendix, dynamite German ammunition barges in the harbor. Enraged, Lukas orders the hostages shot. General Schunzel, furious at the blunder that enabled Bendix to escape, kills Lukas to protect his own position. Luise and Cordova, unsuspected by the General, are permitted to go their way.

Lester Cole and Frank Butler wrote the screen play, Sol C. Siegel produced it, and Frank Tuttle directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"True to Life" with Dick Powell, Mary Martin and Franchot Tone

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 93 min.)

A very cheerful comedy; it should prove entertaining to all types of audiences, for it has fast action, snappy dialogue, spirited performances, and amusing clowning. The story, which is a variation on the "daffy" family theme, revolves around two idea-short, radio script writers, one of whom becomes a boarder with Mary Martin's family, and uses their every day happenings to carry on with a radio family serial, without them being aware of it. The story is lightweight, but it serves well as a means of putting over the comedy. There are so many amusing situations, one is kept laughing from beginning to end. Victor Moore, as the invention-minded father, is exceptionally good; the gadgets he creates provokes hilarious laughter. Miss Martin and Dick Powell sing a few numbers, but this does not retard the action. The romance is pleasing:—

Dick Powell and Franchot Tone, high-salaried radio writers, are threatened with the loss of their jobs unless they improve the story material for their family program, which had become artificial and unpopular. In search of fresh ideas, Powell sets out to meet different people. He meets Mary Martin, waitress in a diner, who, under the impression that he was broke, invites him to live with her family until he can find work. The family included Victor Moore and Mabel Paige, her parents; Raymond Roe and Beverly Hudson, her 'teen-age brother and sister; and William Demarest, her uncle, who managed to stay unemployed. Powell makes notes of the conversations and peculiar antics of the family, secretly giving this information to Tone, who uses it almost verbatim for a new true-to-life program, which becomes a sensation. Powell falls in love with Mary, but Tone gleefully tries to steal Mary away from him. Powell and Tone find themselves in hot water when the family discovers that they are the real subjects of the sensational new program; they sue the sponsors for \$100,000. Mary, furious at her two suitors, refuses to see them. As a result of the publicity, the family finds itself the most famous in the country. Moore calls off the suit, and decides to find out which one of the two men Mary is really in love with. He arranges for the three to meet. After much quibbling, Mary chooses Powell, unaware that Moore had hidden a microphone in the room, thus allowing a listening radio audience to hear her make the choice.

Don Hartman and Harry Tugend wrote the screen play, Paul Jones produced it, and George Marshall directed it. The cast includes Ernest Truex, Tim Ryan and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Nobody's Darling" with Mary Lee, Grace George and Louis Calhern

(Republic, August 27; time, 71 min.)

A pleasing little picture, with music, revolving around 'teen-age youngsters, children of Hollywood stars. Although it will not excite anybody, at least it will not send one home feeling gloomy; it is acted by youthful players, and the mood is cheerful. It has a number of amusing comedy situations, and some very pleasant singing by Mary Lee. The production values are good:—

At the Pennington School, an institution where the children of Hollywood stars are educated, Mary Lee, 'teen-age daughter of Grace George and Louis Calhern, movie stars, determines to be a star in her own right. She seeks a part in the school show, but Jackie Moron, its student-producer, whom she loved secretly, rejects her; she had big feet and could not dance. Jackie, however, gives her a leading part when he hears her sing. Meanwhile family troubles beset Mary; the studio that had her parents under contract had dropped her mother and retained her father. This leads to a disagreement between her parents, who separate. Seeking to attract Jackie, Mary learns from her mother the art of achieving personal glamour. One day, at rehearsal, she makes a spectacular entrance, wearing a low-cut gown and high-heel shoes. Jackie and the others roar with laughter. Cut to the quick, Mary runs away from school. Jackie, learning that she was headed for home, goes after her in the school's station wagon and manages to get her off the bus. While they argue about her returning to school, thieves steal the tires off the automobile. After walking for many hours, they finally reach a telephone. Jackie contacts a friend, who calls for them. By the time they return to the school, where their frantic parents await them, the newspapers had publicized their disappearance. Because of this publicity, Mary's parents and Lloyd Corrigan, Jackie's father, decide to withdraw them from the school. But Lee Patrick, head of the school, intervenes and induces the parents to allow the children to stay. The show is a huge success. Miss George, realizing that she was getting along in years, forsakes her career to pay more attention to her family.

Olive Cooper wrote the screen play, Harry Grey produced it, and Anthony Mann directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Frontier Badmen" with Robert Paige, Diana Barrymore and Anne Gwynne

(Universal, August 6; time, 76 min.)

A fairly good western with plenty of action, and better-than-average production values. The story is routine, and the treatment is somewhat mechanical, but it should satisfy the followers of Western melodramas, for there are fierce fist fights, a good deal of shooting, and some exciting horse riding. There is considerable suspense, which is maintained to the very end, where a cattle stampede through the heart of the town foils the villain's gang and saves the hero. Leo Carrillo and Andy Devine provide some comedy. The performances are adequate:—

Arriving in Abilene, Kansas, Robert Paige, Noah Beery, Jr., and Andy Devine, Texas cowboys, go to a saloon owned by Thomas Gomez, where they learn that Texas cattlemen were being swindled and terrorized by a crooked cattle-buying combine, which controlled the price paid for cattle. Paige resolves to smoke out the combine. To see what will happen, he buys a herd of cattle from William Farnum at a higher price than that paid by the combine. Farnum is murdered. Paige and Beery go to claim Farnum's cattle, and find Leo Carrillo and Anne Gwynne in charge of the herd. Anne, an orphan, had been raised by Farnum. Paige drives the herd into town, and there enrages the combine by sell-

ing the cattle at a high price. Paige eventually learns that Gomez is head of the combine, and defies him by establishing an honest cattle exchange. Meanwhile Anne had fallen in love with Paige, but he had fallen in love with Diana Barrymore, card dealer in the saloon, thus arousing Anne's jealousy. Beery, secretly in love with Anne, dislikes Paige's treatment of her. The two pals quarrel. Both, however, are brought together again when the combine attempts to smash the honest exchange. In the ensuing gun battles, two men are killed by Paige, and Gomez has him arrested for murder. Gomez manages to get the town's rowdies drunk, and incited the intoxicated mob to storm the jail and lynch Paige. Beery, summoned by Anne, stampedes a herd of cattle through the town and disperses the mob. In the gun battle that follows, Gomez and his henchmen are killed. Diana, while aiding Paige, is wounded. It all ends with Anne realizing her love for Beery, and both couples heading for Texas.

Gerald Geraghty and Morgan B. Cox wrote the screen play, Ford Beebe produced it, and William McGann directed it. The cast includes Lon Chaney, Tex Ritter and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Tornado" with Chester Morris and Nancy Kelly

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 83 min.)

A fast-moving program melodrama; it should easily satisfy the action fans. Although the story creeks with age, and it unfolds in a manner one expects, it holds the spectator's attention fairly well owing to the fast action and tense situations. It is the oft-told story of the man who, spurred on by his social-climbing wife, attains success, only to find that his wife had been unfaithful while he busied himself. Most of the excitement occurs towards the finish, where a fight between the hero and his wife's lover is climaxed by a sudden tornado. It has some comedy here and there, but it is not exactly a pleasant entertainment:—

Chester Morris, a happy-go-lucky miner, marries Nancy Kelly, a cabaret singer, whose social ambitions spur him on. He becomes mine superintendent. When Bill Henry, Morris' brother, takes Gwen Kenyon into the mine on a sight-seeing visit, an accidental explosion blinds her. Nestor Paiva, Gwen's father, vows to kill the man who took her into the mine. The same accident cripples Joe Sawyer, a miner. Despondent, Sawyer kills himself, leaving an old farm to Nancy, who had befriended him. Morris discovers a rich coal vein on the farm, and secures financial backing to open his own mine. Meanwhile Nancy becomes friendly with a social set, and is attracted to Morgan Conway, socialite manager of the mining company Morris formerly worked for. Conway plots to prevent Morris' mine from producing. By falsely accusing Morris of having been responsible for Gwen's blindness, Conway induces Paiva to dynamite Morris' mine, closing it down. While Morris fights the mine fire, Nancy gives a house-warming party at her new mansion and makes love to Conway. Gwen, her sight restored by an operation, helps Morris, whom she secretly loved. Paiva, seriously injured by the fire he had started, confesses to Morris before he dies. After bringing the fire under control, Morris returns home where he finds his wife and Conway in an embrace. A terrific fight between the two men ensues, ending with Conway knocked out under a big elm tree on the lawn. Nancy rushes to his side. Just then a tornado strikes, demolishing the new-built mansion and felling the tree, which kills the two lovers. Morris and Gwen look forward to a new life together.

Maxwell Shane wrote the screen play, William Pine and William Thomas produced it, and William Berke directed it.

Adult entertainment.

IN TWO SECTIONS—SECTION TWO

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

4014 Good Luck, Mr. Yates—Trevor-Buchanan..	June 29
4015 What's Buzzin' Cousin—Ann Miller.....	July 8
4011 Appointment in Berlin—Sanders-Chapman..	July 15
4008 First Comes Courage—Aherne-Oberon.....	July 29
4206 Robin Hood on the Range—Starrett (57 m.)..	July 29
Passport to Suez—Warren William.....	Aug. 19
My Kingdom for a Cook—Coburn-Chapman..	Aug. 31

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

334 Hitler's Madman—Carradine	June-July-Aug.
370 Random Harvest—Colman-Garson ...	June-July Aug.
380 The Human Comedy—Rooney	June-July-Aug.

(End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

401 Salute to The Marines—Beery.....	September
402 Above Suspicion—Crawford-MacMurray..	September
403 I Dood It—Skelton-Powell.....	September
404 Swing Shift Maisie—Sothorn-Craig.....	October
405 Best Foot Forward—Ball-Gaxton.....	October
406 Tartu—Robert Donat	October
407 Dr. Gillespie's Criminal Case—Barrymore..	November
408 Young Ideas—Astor-Marshall	November
409 Girl Crazy—Garland-Rooney	November
410 Lassie Come Home—McDowall-Crisp	not set
411 The Man From Down Under—Laughton- Barnes	December
412 Whistling in Brooklyn—Skelton- Rutherford	December

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

1942-43

225 Spy Train—Travis-Craig (re.).....	July 9
253 The Stranger from Pecos—J. M. Brown (57m)..	July 16
213 Wings Over the Pacific—Norris-Cooper (re.)..	July 23
267 Black Market Rustlers—Range Busters (59m)..	July 28
205 Ghosts on the Loose—East Side Kids (re.)...	July 30
257 Law Rides Again—Maynard-Gibson (57m)..	Aug. 6
254 Six Gun Gospel—J. M. Brown.....	Sept. 3
222 Here Comes Kelly—Quillan-Woodbury.....	Sept. 10
215 Revenge of the Zombies—Carradine-Borg...	Sept. 17

(More to come)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

308 Melody Parade—Quillan-Hughes	Sept. 17
307 Spotlight Scandals—Fay-Gilbert	Sept. 24

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 4229 Submarine Alert—Arlen-BarrieSept. 17

Producers Releasing Corp. Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 366 Lone Rider No. 4—Livingston (60 m.).....June 21
 361 Billy the Kid No. 5—Crabbe (58 m.).....July 1
 306 Follies Girl—Wendy BarrieJuly 26
 355 Texas Rangers No. 5—Newill-O'Brien (60m) .Aug. 1
 362 Billy the Kid No. 6—CrabbeAug. 16
 367 Lone Rider No. 5—LivingstonAug. 21
 356 Texas Rangers No. 6—Newill-O'BrienSept. 14
 368 Lone Rider No. 6—LivingstonSept. 30

(More to come)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- 405 Submarine Base—Litel-BaxterJuly 20
 401 Isle of Forgotten Sins—Carradine.....Aug. 15
 411 Danger! Women at Work—Kelly-BrianAug. 23
 459 Blazing Frontier—CrabbeSept. 1
 406 Tiger Fangs—Crabbe-D'OrsaySept. 10
 Girl from Monterey—Armida-Kennedy.....Sept. 24

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

1942-43

- 2305 Mexicali Rose—Gene Autry (reissue) (58m) .July 15
 256 Silver Spurs—Roy Rogers (68 m.) (re.)...Aug. 12
 2314 Wagon Tracks West—Elliott (55 m.).....Aug. 19
 225 Someone to Remember—Paige-CravenAug. 21
 226 West Side Kid—Barry-Hull-EvansAug. 23
 224 Headin' For God's Country—Lundigan....Aug. 26
 227 Nobody's Darling—Lee-Calhern-George ...Aug. 27
 2306 In Old Monterey—Gene Autry (reissue)
 (72m)Sept. 1
 228 Sleepy Lagoon—Canova-DaySept. 5

(More to come)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- 361 Fugitive from Sonora—Barry (55 m.).....July 1
 301 The Saint Meets the Tiger—Sinclair.....July 29
 362 Black Hills Express—Barry (55 m.).....Aug. 15

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 331 Petticoat Larceny—Warwick-Carroll)
 335 The Sky's the Limit—Astaire-Leslie)
 332 The Falcon in Danger—Tom Conway) No
 334 Behind the Rising Sun—Margo-Neal) National
 333 Mexican Spitfire's Blessed Event—) release
 Errol-Velez) dates
 329 Bombardier—O'Brien-Scott)
 336 Coastal Command—English cast)

(End of 1942-43 Season)

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 344 Stormy Weather—Horne-RobinsonJuly 16
-
- (End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- 401 Bomber's Moon—Montgomery-Annabella ...Aug. 6
 402 Heaven Can Wait—Ameche-TierneyAug. 13
 403 Holy Matrimony—Fields-WoolleyAug. 27

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- Yanks Ahoy—Hal RoachAug. 6

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 7009 Mr. Big—O'Connor-Jean (release number
 changed from 7013)May 28
 7076 Raiders of San Joaquin—J. M. Brown (60m) .June 4
 7014 Captive Wild Woman—Carradine-
 AcquanettaJune 4
 7043 All By Myself—Knowles-AnkersJune 11
 7013 Two Tickets to London—Morgan-Curtis...June 18
 7045 Get Going—MacDonald-PaigeJune 25
 7003 Hit the Ice—Abbott-CostelloJuly 2
 7046 Gals, Inc.—Errol-MacDonaldJuly 9
 7006 Hers to Hold—Cotten-DurbinJuly 16
 7047 Honeymoon Lodge—Bruce-HilliardJuly 23
 7077 The Lone Star Trail—J. M. Brown (57m) .Aug. 6
 Frontier Bad Man—Barrymore-PaigeAug. 6
 7064 We've Never Been Licked—Gwynne-Quine .Aug. 13
 7061 Phantom of the Opera—Eddy-FosterAug. 27
 (End of 1942-43 Season)

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 233 The Constant Nymph—Boyer-FontaineJuly 24
 224 This Is the Army—Soldier castAug. 14
 (End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- 301 Watch on the Rhine—Lukas-DavisSept. 4
 330 Oklahoma Kid—Bogart-Cagney (reissue) ...Sept. 18
 303 Thank Your Lucky Stars—All starSept. 25
 331 Song of the Saddle—Dick Foran (reissue)....Oct. 2
 332 Prairie Thunder—Dick Foran (reissue).....Oct. 2
 333 The Cherokee Strip—Dick Foran (reissue)...Oct. 2
 334 Empty Holsters—Dick Foran (reissue).....Oct. 2
 335 Guns of the Pecos—Dick Foran (reissue)....Oct. 2
 336 Land Beyond the Law—Dick Foran (reissue)..Oct. 2
 302 Murder on the Waterfront—LoderOct. 9

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**Columbia—One Reel**

- 4510 He Can't Make it Stick—Col. Rhap. (7m.)...July 23
 4710 The Fly in the Ointment—Phan. (6½m.)...July 23
 4809 Sweeping Oars—Col. Rhap. (7m.)...July 29
 4601 Kitchen Quiz No. 1—Quiz (10m.)...Aug. 21
 4511 A Hunting We Will Go—Col. Rhap. (7m.)...Aug. 23
 4711 Dizzy Newsreel—Phantasies (6½m.)...Aug. 27

*(End of 1942-43 Season)***Beginning of 1943-44 Season**

- 5651 Community Sings No. 1.....July 29
 5851 Screen Snapshots No. 1.....Aug. 15
 5901 Birds on the Wing—PanoramicAug. 26
 5801 Kings of Basketball—SportsAug. 27
 5652 Community Sings No. 2.....Aug. 27
 5951 Film Vodvil No. 1—Mousie Powell.....Sept. 10
 5501 The Rocky Road to Ruin—Color Rhap....Sept. 16
 5751 House Renting—Fox & CrowSept. 30

Columbia—Two Reels

- 4408 Higher than a Kite—Stooges (18m.).....July 30
(End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- 5120 The Electrical Brain—The Batman No. 1
 (30 m.)July 16
 5121 The Bat's Cove—Batman No. 2 (20m.).....July 23
 5122 The Mark of the Zombies—Batman No. 3
 (20 m.)July 30
 5123 Slaves of the Rising Sun—Batman No. 4
 (20 m.)Aug. 6
 5425 Shot in the Escape—Gil. & Naz.Aug. 6
 5124 The Living Corpse—Batman No. 5 (20m.)...Aug. 13
 5401 I Can Hardly Wait—StoogesAug. 13
 5125 Poison Peril—Batman No. 6 (20m.).....Aug. 20
 5426 Farmer for a Day—ClydeAug. 20
 5126 The Phoney Doctor—Batman No. 7 (20m.)...Aug. 27
 5427 Quack Service—U. MerkelSept. 3
 5127 Lured By Radium—Batman No. 8 (20m.)...Sept. 10
 5128 The Sign of the Sphinx—Batman No. 9
 (20 m.)Sept. 17
 5129 Flying Spies—Batman No. 10 (20m.)Sept. 24

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- W-449 Yankee Doodle Mouse—Cartoon (8m.)...June 26
 S-468 Seeing Hands—Pete Smith (11m.).....July 3
 K-484 Don't You Believe It—Pass. Par. (10m.)...July 3
 W-450 The Uninvited Pest—Cartoon (8m.).....July 17
 K-485 Trifles that Win Wars—Pass. Par. (11m.)...July 17
 M-439 Journey to Yesterday—Min. (11m.).....July 17
 K-486 Forgotten Treasure—Pass. Par. (10m.)...July 24
 C-496 Election Daze—Our Gang (10m.).....July 31
 K-487 Nursery Rhyme Mysteries—Pass. Par.(11m.)...July 31
 S-469 Seventh Column—Pete Smith (9m.).....July 31
 M-440 Ode to Victory—Miniatures (11m.).....July 31
 W-451 One Ham's Family—Cartoon (8m.).....Aug. 14
 T-421 Glimpses of Mexico—Traveltalk (9m.)...Aug. 21

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-402 Heavenly Music—Special (22m.).....May 1

Paramount—One Reel

- L2-5 Unusual Occupations No. 5—(10m.).....July 9
 E2-10 Happy Birthdaze—Popeye (7m.).....July 16
 A2-10 Sing Helen Sing—Headliner (10m.).....July 23
 W2-5 Superman in Secret Agent—(8m.).....July 30
 R2-9 Where the Cactus Grow—Sportlight (9m.)...July 30
 U2-6 The Truck that Flew—Mad. Mod. (9m.)...Aug. 6
 E2-12 Wood Peckin'—Popeye (7m.).....Aug. 6
 J2-6 Popular Science No. 6—(10m.).....Aug. 13

RKO—One Reel

- 34203 North African Album—Vic. Spec. (9m.)...June 3
 34311 Cloud Chasers—Sportscope (8m.).....June 18
 34407 Duke Ellington's Orchestra—Jamborees
 (8 m.)July 9
 34106 Victory Vehicles—Disney (8m.).....July 30

RKO—Two Reels

- 33108 Lieutenant Smith—This is Amer. (20m.)...June 4
 33109 Pacific Island No. 43—This is Amer. (17m.)...July 2
 33110 Broadway Dimout—This is America.....July 30

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 3569 The Last Roundup—Terry-Toon (7m.)....May 14
 3572 Keep 'Em Growing—Terry-Toon (7m.)....May 28
 3902 Jungle Land—Lew Lehr (9m.).....June 4
 3571 Pandora's Box—Terry-Toon (7m.).....June 11
 3570 Mopping Up—Terry-Toon (7m.).....June 25
 3305 Streamline and Stamina—Sports (9m.)....July 2
 3852 Women in Blue—World Today (10m.)....July 16

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

- Vol. 9 No. 11 Invasion—March of Time (20m.)...June 18
 Vol. 9 No. 12 Bill Jack versus Adolph Hitler (20m.)...July 23
(End of 1942-43 Season)

Universal—One Reel

7381 The Armless Dentist—Per. Odd. (9m.)....June 28
 7382 Western Cowgirl—Per. Odd. (9m.).....July 19
 7362 Any Chickens Today—Var. Views (9m.)...July 26
 7248 Ration Bored—Lantz Cartune (7m.).....July 27
 7235 Pass the Biscuits Mirandy—Symphony (7m.)..Aug. 23
 7383 Cactus Artist—Per. Odd. (9m.).....Aug. 23
 7363 Yukon Outpost—Var. Views (9m.).....Aug. 30
 (End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

8371 Wizard of Autos—Per. Odd.Sept. 20
 8351 Who's Next—Variety ViewsSept. 27
 8231 Boogie Woogie Man—Lantz CartuneSept. 27

Universal—Two Reels

8693 Capturing the Scorpion—Don Winslow No. 13
 (19 m.)June 29
 7131 Smoke Rings—Musical (15m.).....July 28
 7132 South Sea Rhythms—Musical (15m.).....Aug. 25
 (End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

8121 Hit Tune Serenade—MusicalSept. 29

Vitaphone—One Reel

8510 U. S. Service Bands—Mel. Mas. (7m.).....July 24
 8412 Snow Sports—Sports (10m.)July 24
 8719 Hiss & Make Up—Mer. Mel. (7m.).....July 31
 8413 Dude Ranch Buckaroos—Sports (10m.)...Aug. 14
 8610 Scrappy Happy Daffy—Looney Tune (7m.)..Aug. 21
 8720 Corny Concerto—Mer. Mel. (7m.).....Aug. 21
 8721 Fin-N-Caddie—Mer. Mel. (7m.).....Aug. 28
 8722 Fally Hare—Mer. Mel. (7m.).....Sept. 11
 8612 Daffy the Commando—Looney Tune (7m.)..Sept. 25
 8723 Inky and the Mina Bird—Mer. Mel. (7m.)..Oct. 9
 8724 An Itch in Time—Mer. Mel. (7m.).....Oct. 23
 8613 Puss and Booty—Looney Tune (7m.).....Oct. 30
 8725 Little Red Riding Habit—Mer. Mel. (7m.)..Nov. 6
 8726 What's Cookin' Doc?—Mer. Mel. (7m.)...Nov. 20
 (End of 1942-43 Season)

Vitaphone—Two Reels

8005 Mountain Fighters—Special (20m.).....Aug. 7
 (End of 1942-43 Season)

NEWSWEEKLY NEW YORK**RELEASE DATES****Pathe News**

352100 Wed.(E) Aug. 11
 351101 Sat. (O) Aug. 14
 352102 Wed.(E) Aug. 18
 351103 Sat. (O) Aug. 21
 352104 Wed.(E) Aug. 25
 (End of
 1942-43 Season)

**Beginning of
1943-44 Season**

45101 Sat. (O) Aug. 28
 45202 Wed.(E) Sept. 1
 45103 Sat. (O) Sept. 4
 45204 Wed.(E) Sept. 8
 45105 Sat. (O) Sept. 11
 45206 Wed.(E) Sept. 15
 45107 Sat. (O) Sept. 18
 45208 Wed.(E) Sept. 22

Universal

213 Wed. (O)..Aug. 11
 214 Fri. (E) ...Aug. 13
 215 Wed. (O)..Aug. 18
 216 Fri. (E) ...Aug. 20
 217 Wed. (O)..Aug. 25
 218 Fri. (E) ...Aug. 27
 219 Wed. (O)..Sept. 1
 220 Fri. (E) ...Sept. 3
 221 Wed. (O)..Sept. 8
 222 Fri. (E) ...Sept. 10
 223 Wed. (O)..Sept. 15
 224 Fri. (E) ...Sept. 17
 225 Wed. (O)..Sept. 22

Paramount News

99 Sun. (O) ..Aug. 8
 100 Thurs. (E) .Aug. 12
 101 Sun. (O) ..Aug. 15
 102 Thurs. (E) .Aug. 19
 103 Sun. (O) ..Aug. 22
 104 Thurs. (E) .Aug. 26
 105 Sun. (O) ..Aug. 29
 106 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 2
 (End of
 1942-43 Season)

**Beginning of
1943-44 Season**

1 Sun. (O) ..Sept. 5
 2 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 9
 3 Sun. (O) ..Sept. 12
 4 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 16
 5 Sun. (O) ..Sept. 19
 6 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 23

Fox Movietone

97 Tues. (O) .Aug. 10
 98 Thurs. (E) .Aug. 12
 99 Tues. (O) .Aug. 17
 100 Thurs. (E) .Aug. 19
 101 Tues. (O) .Aug. 24
 102 Thurs. (E) .Aug. 26
 103 Tues. (O) .Aug. 31
 104 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 2
 (End of
 1942-43 Season)

**Beginning of
1943-44 Season**

1 Tues. (O) .Sept. 7
 2 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 9
 3 Tues. (O) .Sept. 14
 4 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 16
 5 Tues. (O) .Sept. 21
 6 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 23

Metrotone News

296 Thurs. (E) .Aug. 12
 297 Tues. (O) .Aug. 17
 298 Thurs. (E) .Aug. 19
 299 Tues. (O) .Aug. 24
 300 Thurs. (E) .Aug. 26
 301 Tues. (O) .Aug. 31
 302 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 2
 303 Tues. (O) .Sept. 7
 (End of
 1942-43 Season)

**Beginning of
1943-44 Season**

200 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 9
 201 Tues. (O) .Sept. 14
 202 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 16
 203 Tues. (O) .Sept. 21
 204 Thurs. (E) .Sept. 23

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No. 34

COLUMBIA'S FAILURE TO DELIVER ON THE 1942-43 PROGRAM

At its meeting held in Baltimore on August 12 and 13, the Board of Directors of Allied States Association adopted a resolution condemning Columbia Pictures for its failure to deliver pictures listed in its 1942-43 product announcement.

"For the 1942-43 season," states the resolution, "Columbia solicited contracts from the exhibitors on the basis of a printed prospectus, or announcement, entitled 'Columbia's 48 Feature Victory Program, 1942-43.' The announcement contained pictures of the stars who were to appear in Columbia's pictures during the season, and listed by title, star, producer or other identifying data 17 feature pictures of potential box-office value which were to be delivered as a part of Columbia's program for the 1942-43 season."

Attached to the resolution is a list of the seventeen pictures described in the Columbia announcement; a list of the top pictures thus far released by Columbia under its 1942-43 contracts; and a list of some of the pictures, which, though announced on the 1942-43 program and not delivered, are now being offered as part of Columbia's 1943-44 program. The lists follow:

Top potential box-office pictures listed in the 1942-43 announcement: (1) Cary Grant-Rosalind Russell production. (2) "Great American Way," a George Stevens production. (3) Irene Dunne-Melvyn Douglas production. (4) "Young Girl's Fancy," with Jean Arthur. (5) "Destroyer." (6) "Gang's All Here," with Jack Oakie and Don Ameche. (7) "Commandos Strike at Dawn." (8) "Wild is the River," based on the best-seller novel by Louis Bromfield, with an all-star cast and prominent director. (9) "Knights Without Armor," with Olivia de Havilland and Brian Aherne. (10) "Gay Seniorita" with Rita Hayworth. (11) "Miss Grant Takes Richmond," with Rita Hayworth. (12) "Cover Girl," with Rita Hayworth. (13) "Defense Town," with Rita Hayworth and Humphrey Bogart. (14) "Pioneers." (15) "City Without Men," with Glenn Ford and Claire Trevor. (16) "The Return of Mr. Jordan." (17) "Salute to Sahara."

Pictures released to date as top pictures for 1942-43:
Production numbers

- 4001 "The More the Merrier" with Jean Arthur. This corresponds to No. 4, "Young Girl's Fancy."
- 4002 "You Were Never Lovelier," with Rita Hayworth. This corresponds to No. 10, "Gay Seniorita."
- 4003 "Destroyer." This corresponds to No. 5.
- 4004 "Commandos Strike at Dawn." This corresponds to No. 7.
- 4005 "The Desperadoes." This corresponds to No. 14, "Pioneers."
- 4006 "Something to Shout About." This corresponds to No. 6, "The Gang's All Here."
- 4007 No release.
- 4008 "First Comes Courage." This is a substitution.
- 4009 "A Night to Remember." This is a substitution.
- 4010 No release.
- 4011 "Appointment in Berlin." This is a substitution.
- 4012 "Reveille with Beverly." This was among the lesser pictures listed on the 1942-43 announcement.
- 4013 "City Without Men." This corresponds to No. 15, but lacks the star names that had been announced; it stars Glenda Farrell and Linda Darnell.
- 4014 "Good Luck Mr. Yates." This is a substitution.
- 4015 "What's Buzzin' Cousin." This, too, was among the lesser pictures listed on the announcement.

Grouping what Columbia considers the top pictures released to date, we get the following: Six of the promised pictures have been delivered; four are substitutions; and three are minor pictures placed in a higher bracket.

Pictures corresponding to undelivered 1942-43 pictures and announced for 1943-44 are as follows: "Sahara," which corresponds to "Salute to Sahara"; "My Client Curley" with Cary Grant, which corresponds to the Grant-Russell production; "Ten Percent Woman" with Rosalind Russell, which, too, corresponds to the Grant-Russell production; "Cover Girl," "Heart of a City," and "Gone Are the Days," all three with Rita Hayworth, corresponding to the three pictures undelivered; "Road to Yesterday" with Irene Dunne, corresponding to the Dunne-Douglas production; and "Knights Without Armor."

As mentioned in the resolution, "These lists show how few of the promised pictures were delivered; how some of the best attractions are being held over as inducement for the exhibitors to sign Columbia deals for next season."

"Admittedly," continues the resolution, "Columbia has protected itself against legal liability for this flagrant breach of faith with its customers. This has been accomplished by limiting its undertaking in the contract to the delivery, up to the maximum number stated, of pictures actually released during the contract period. Nevertheless, the contracts were solicited on the basis of the printed announcement and exhibitors relied on the announcement in signing the contracts. The publication and use of the announcement, under the circumstances, amounted to a representation that the attractions described therein would be delivered."

"A vicious feature of the tactics pursued by Columbia, from the standpoint of the exhibitors, is that the high film rental brackets, to which the exhibitors had a right to expect that outstanding attractions would be allocated, have been used for pictures of lesser value and in this fashion the exhibitors have been subjected to losses of revenue which could not have been anticipated when the deals were made."

"On the record it is apparent that the exhibitors can place little or no reliance on Columbia's representations as to the attractions which it will deliver. They cannot with confidence agree to terms for Columbia's pictures which are in excess of the value of the lesser pictures which, it must be assumed, will be delivered in place of the box-office attractions listed in its announcements. The only way in which Columbia can erase this blot on its record and regain the confidence of the exhibitors is voluntarily to deliver under its 1942-1943 contracts the eight pictures above mentioned which are now included in its 1943-1944 program."

Allied's condemnation of Columbia is justified; Columbia, because of its failure to deliver pictures that induced exhibitors to sign 1942-43 contracts, and its action in announcing such pictures as part of the new season's program, shows utter disregard for the moral rights of its contract-holders. Because of the system under which Columbia offers its pictures for sale, an exhibitor has to rely on the company's reputation. But how much is such a reputation worth when one remembers that throughout the years Columbia has repeatedly failed to deliver pictures in accordance with its product announcement?

Soliciting contracts on the basis of appealing advertising, with a stipulation that the same shall not be considered binding; refusing or failing to deliver pictures of potential box-office value; and using such pictures as an inducement in selling contracts for the following season have long been among the rank producer-distributor abuses under the system of block-booking and blind-selling.

If Columbia won't voluntarily deliver the pictures morally due on its 1942-43 contracts, its contract-holders may be compelled to appeal to some government agency, in an effort to curb this unfair trade practice.

In the meantime, HARRISON'S REPORTS will seek to ascertain Columbia's attitude toward the request that it give its 1942-43 contract-holders those pictures announced but not delivered.

"So This Is Washington" with Lum 'n' Abner

(RKO, no release date set; time, 64 min.)

If the previous "Lum and Abner" program pictures have proved acceptable to your patrons, this one, too, should please them; in quality of story and in type of humor it varies little from the rest of the series. This time the boys, to aid the war effort, go to Washington with a secret synthetic rubber formula. The comedy is brought about by the predicaments they get themselves into as a result of the hotel room shortage, and the difficulties they encounter trying to arrange an appointment with a busy government agency head. All this may amuse family audiences in rural situations, but others will probably find it boring:—

When the radio announces that Alan Mowbray, a Government bureau head, is seeking inventions from the common man, Lum (Chester Lauck) and Abner (Norris Goff) decide to go to Washington to give Mowbray a synthetic rubber formula that Abner had accidentally invented. Arriving at the capital, they run into problems characteristic of the hectic city. Roger Clark, a newspaper columnist, who came from their home town, offers to help them. He shares his living quarters, and then takes them to Mildred Coles, his fiancée and Mowbray's secretary, to arrange for an immediate appointment. But Mildred, because of a lovers' quarrel, refuses to arrange the meeting. They finally get together with Mowbray, who becomes enthused over their invention. He arranges for a demonstration before a skeptical press. Abner, however, receives a blow on the head and loses his memory; he cannot remember the formula, which was never written down. He does not even remember Lum, or his own name. Lum takes him home, hoping that the sight of the store will bring back his memory. When this fails, the theory is advanced that another blow on the head may bring back Abner's memory. Lum consents to deliver the blow, but cannot bring himself to hit his friend. He and Abner quarrel and, in the scuffle, the blow is delivered, restoring Abner's memory. He mixes the formula and vindicates Mowbray, who had been heckled by the press.

Leonard Praskins and Roswell Rogers wrote the screen play, Ben Hersh produced it, and Raymond McCarey directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Lassie Come Home" with Roddy McDowall and Donald Crisp

(MGM, no release date set; time, 89 min.)

This sentimental tale of the devotion between a boy and his dog, photographed in Technicolor, is an artistic production; it should find favor particularly with dog lovers. The one drawback, as far as the masses are concerned, is the slow-paced action. Another drawback is the fact that Roddy McDowall's role is somewhat similar to the one he enacted in 20th Century-Fox's "My Friend Flicka," and the sentimental angles, too, are similar. The sameness of the material may result in decreased patronage. Otherwise, the story is extremely heart-warming, stirring one's emotions. Most of the footage is given over to "Lassie," a beautiful and intelligent collie. One is in sympathy with the dog as much as with a human being, for one feels her deep sorrow at being separated from Roddy. The outdoor scenic shots, enhanced by the Technicolor photography, are a treat to the eye. Because of its limited appeal, the film will probably be no more than a moderate box-office attraction:—

Because of their dire circumstances, Donald Crisp and Elsa Lanchester, a Yorkshire couple, are compelled to sell Lassie, their collie. She is bought by Nigel Bruce, English Duke and dog fancier, who had been trying to buy her for years. Roddy McDowall, Crisp's young son, is inconsolable; he loved the dog dearly, and looked forward to meeting her in the school yard at four o'clock each day. When Lassie escapes from the kennels twice in order to meet Roddy, Bruce angrily takes her to his estate in Scotland. Roddy is saddened greatly. Meanwhile in Scotland, Lassie

is mistreated by J. Patrick O'Malley, Bruce's dog trainer. One day she breaks away from O'Malley and heads south for Yorkshire. For days she battles her way through snow and rain storms, and swims rivers. She fights off ferocious sheep dogs set on her by sheepherders, who shoot and wound her. On the verge of death, she is found by Ben Webster and Dame Mac Witty, a kindly Scottish couple, who nurse her back to health. She resumes her journey to Yorkshire and, on the way, joins Edmund Gwenn, a traveling peddler, going in the same direction. She repays Gwenn for his kind treatment by chasing off a pair of thugs who attack him. Moving on, she eventually reaches home, where Roddy's parents are overjoyed at the sight of her. Shortly after, Bruce arrives. Ignoring Lassie's presence, he offers Crisp a job tending his kennels, in place of the dismissed O'Malley. A few minutes before four o'clock Lassie becomes restless. Despite her weariness, she drags herself out of the house and goes to the school. Roddy greets her jubilantly.

Hugo Butler wrote the screen play from the novel by the late Eric Knight. Samuel Marx produced it, and Fred M. Wilcox directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Fallen Sparrow" with John Garfield and Maureen O'Hara

(RKO, no release date set; time, 94 min.)

Despite the implausibility of the story, this spy melodrama is exciting fare; it should satisfy most picture-goers, for it is different from the general run of pictures of this type. The story is intriguing, and holds one in tense suspense throughout. John Garfield turns in an excellent performance as an American veteran of the Spanish Civil War. His efforts to avenge the murder of a close friend results in the exposure of a Nazi spy ring. Garfield's mysterious movements keep the spectator guessing, and it is not until toward the finish that one understands his motives. Even the romantic interest is given a new twist:—

Having recuperated on an Arizona ranch from the tortures he had suffered in a Spanish prison during the Spanish Civil War, John Garfield comes to New York City to avenge the murder of the man who had helped him to escape. Seeking to learn the murderer's identity, Garfield visits the home of Patricia Morison, his former socialite fiancée, who maintains that his friend had committed suicide by jumping out of a window in her home during a party. Garfield finds his old New York haunts cluttered with refugees, and becomes convinced that among them he would find the murderer. Carefully following clues, Garfield finds that Martha O'Driscoll, another former fiancée, had become over-friendly with refugees. Through her, he narrows down his suspects to a group of Norwegian refugees, headed by Dr. Walter Slezak, an invalid. The group includes one woman, Maureen O'Hara, with whom Garfield eventually falls in love. Maureen admits to him that the refugees are actually Nazi spies, and that she was compelled to work with them lest her two-year-old son in Germany meet with harm. She pleads with him to give up the pursuit for the murderer, but he refuses to do so. He reveals that the cat and mouse game between the spies and himself amounted to more than a search for the murderer; he had in his possession a tattered battle flag, which the spies were determined to obtain, in order to satisfy the vanity of a Nazi General, who had lost it on the battle-field. It had now come to the point where either he or the Nazis had to be eliminated. Garfield eventually traps Slezak, who reveals himself as the man who had supervised his torture and murdered his friend. Garfield slays him and, with the aid of the police, rounds up the other spies. He attempts to clear Maureen, but the FBI proves that she had lied about her son; she, too, is arrested.

Warren Duff wrote the screen play, Robert Fellows produced it, and Richard Wallace directed it. The cast includes John Miljan, Hugh Beaumont and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Adventures of a Rookie" with Wally Brown and Alan Carney

(RKO, no release date set; time, 65 min.)

A moderately entertaining slapstick comedy, suitable as a mid-week supporting feature. What there is of the story serves merely to tie together a hodge-podge of old-fashioned comedy situations, some of which are amusing and others that do not provoke as much as a grin. According to RKO, this picture is the first of a series of army life comedies starring Wally Brown and Alan Carney. As a new comedy team, they look promising, but, if they are to gain a following for themselves, they must have better story material:—

Wally Brown, a night-club singer, and Alan Carney, a truck driver, are drafted. On the way to their training camp they become friendly with Richard Martin, another recruit, whose uncle was none other than the commanding officer at the camp. Martin's application to attend O.C.S. is accepted by his uncle, with the admonition that he must keep out of trouble. A few days later the three men receive a six-hour furlough. Margaret Landry, an attractive girl living nearby, invites the boys to a party in her home. At the height of the festivities, the boys learn that the housekeeper had contracted scarlet fever, and that they are quarantined. Frantic, they telephone the camp. Sergeant Erford Gage comes up to investigate, and he, too, is quarantined. After a night of drilling and maneuvers in the house, the men learn that the housekeeper had a strawberry rash, and that they were free to go. The Sergeant orders them to walk the twelve miles back to camp. But the boys decide to hitch-hike. They hop into an Army truck and fall asleep. They wake up on a San Francisco dock, where troops are boarding a ship. They, too, are herded aboard. Anxious to get off the ship and report back to camp, the boys climb into a large loading net suspended from a crane on the dock. The net slips, and all three fall into the water, in time to recover an officer's brief case, which had accidentally fallen overboard. Believing that they had jumped to recover his case, the officer sends them back to their camp with a recommendation that all charges against them be dropped. Martin withdraws his O.C.S. application, preferring to stick with his two trouble-some pals.

Edward James wrote the screen play, Bert Gilroy produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"A Lady Takes a Chance" with Jean Arthur and John Wayne

(RKO, no release date set; time, 86 min.)

A highly entertaining romantic comedy. Cast in a role that is tailored to her particular talents, Jean Arthur will delight her fans with her characterization of a New York working girl who falls in love with a cowboy while on a two weeks vacation in the West. The action is brisk throughout, and the dialogue is sparkling. The story theme is far from original, but so expertly has it been handled that it keeps one laughing from beginning to end. Credit is due the director for making more of the material than what there actually is to it. John Wayne is ideal as the cowboy who thinks more of his horse than he does of Miss Arthur. Some of the situations are suggestive, although not vulgar, since they are done with a touch of comedy. Charles Winninger and Phil Silvers add much to the film's entertainment values:—

Having saved her pennies, Jean Arthur, a New York stenographer, sets out on a two weeks vacation to see the West on a guided bus tour. The trip cross-country is dull and uncomfortable. When the bus stops for a few hours in a Western town, Jean visits a rodeo where she makes the acquaintance of John Wayne, a rodeo performer. Wayne shows her a good time at a local gambling house, and sees to it that she misses her bus. Because no rooms are available in the rodeo-packed town, Wayne offers his hotel room to Jean. Wayne tries to remain in the room, but Jean disposes of him quickly. Both are disillusioned. The following day Jean, in order to catch her bus in Gold City, is com-

pelled to ask Wayne for a lift; he was headed that way for his next rodeo show. That night Wayne, Charles Winninger, his partner, and Jean, camp on the desert. The next morning Wayne is awakened when his horse sneezes. He reprimands Jean for having removed the horse's blanket during the night. When Jean sees Wayne's concern for the horse, she tells Winninger that she wished Wayne could be so concerned over her. Winninger remarks that Wayne could never really love a woman. Jean bets Winninger that she can win Wayne's love. In Gold City, Jean cooks dinner for Wayne and treats him to all the comforts of home. Her wiles take effect. Suddenly realizing that he was falling for her charms, Wayne informs her that he does not want to get married. He leaves her. Disappointed, Jean catches her bus and starts the trip to New York. When she reaches the depot, Jean is met by Wayne. He carries her back into a bus headed West, ignoring her feeble protests.

Robert Ardrey wrote the screen play, Frank Ross produced it, and William Seiter directed it. The cast includes Hans Conreid, Grant Withers, Butch and Buddy, and others.

Adult entertainment.

"Claudia" with Dorothy McGuire and Robert Young

(20th Century-Fox, September 4; time, 91 min.)

This is the type of entertainment that should delight most audiences, for it has heart interest, bright dialogue, excellent comedy, and fine acting. Based on the Broadway stage play of the same title, the story revolves around a thoroughly charming, child-like bride, whose naivete both delights and distracts her husband. In spite of the fact that the movement is confined to a small cottage on a Connecticut farm, and the story is developed by dialogue rather than by action, one's interest is held throughout. Dorothy McGuire, as "Claudia," the role she enacted in the stage play, gives substance to a difficult characterization; she should win many fans for she is a capable actress and has a charming personality. One is deeply stirred by Miss McGuire's sorrow when she learns of the impending death of her mother, whom she loved deeply. Robert Young, as the husband, and Ina Claire, as the mother, are exceptionally good:—

In love and financially secure, Robert Young and Dorothy McGuire, married six months, lead a happy life in their remodelled farmhouse. Dorothy, impulsive and child-like, was instinctively protected from the realities of life by Young and Ina Claire, her mother, whom the young couple adored. Unknown to the newlyweds, Miss Claire suffered from a serious ailment. It being necessary to go to a New York hospital for x-rays, Miss Claire confides in Young and forbids him to tell Dorothy of her predicament. While Young drives Miss Claire to New York, Dorothy becomes mixed up with Reginald Gardner, a playwright and next-door neighbor, and naively permits him to kiss her. Young returns and finds them in an embrace. He disposes of Gardner, but forgives Dorothy. That same day Young is overjoyed to learn that he is to become a father. His joy soon turns to dismay when Miss Claire telephones and informs him that she was doomed to die. She asks him not to inform Dorothy. But Dorothy, true to her habit of listening in on telephone conversations, has heard the news. So that her absence would not give Dorothy cause to worry, Miss Claire returns to the farmhouse and behaves normally. Dorothy, realizing that her mother would be happier thinking that she did not know her secret, asks Young not to mention that she was aware of the impending tragedy. Mother and daughter keep up the pretense, but gradually Miss Claire guesses that Dorothy knew. Happy in the thought that her daughter can now face realities, Miss Claire retires to her room.

Morris Ryskind wrote the screen play from the play by Rose Franken. William Perlberg produced it, and Edmund Goulding directed it. The cast includes Olga Baclanova, Frank Twedell, Elsa Janssen and others.

Adult entertainment.

"The Phantom of the Opera" with Nelson Eddy, Claude Rains and Susanna Foster

(Universal, August 27; time, 91 min.)

Elaborately produced and photographed in Technicolor, "Phantom of the Opera" is a good entertainment, the sort that will direct an appeal to all types of audiences; it offers a steady-moving story with considerable suspense, melodious operatic music, and romantic bits of nonsense. The story was originally produced by Universal in 1925. In 1930, the original production was re-fitted with sound effects and music, and about forty percent of it remade with talk. Unlike the original version, which was a thriller of the horror type, starring Lon Chaney in a fantastic make-up, this version has been altered in a way that makes it more of a musical than a thriller. It does, however, retain the horrific flavor of the original, but to a lesser degree. Among the more exciting sequences are the pursuit of the "Phantom" by Nelson Eddy through the upper wings of the theatre; the crash of a huge chandelier on the audience; and the rescue of the heroine from the "Phantom's" subterranean abode:—

After twenty years as a violinist with the Paris Opera, Claude Rains is discharged. Unable to continue paying secretly for the musical education of Susanna Foster, under-study to the prima donna (Jane Farrar), Rains, to obtain funds, tries to sell a concerto, his life's work. In a dispute over his music, Rains murders a music publisher. The music publisher's secretary, to thwart Rains' escape, hurls acid into his face, disfiguring him. Rains escapes and seeks refuge in the catacombs beneath the opera house. As a masked "Phantom," he terrorizes the opera's management with notes demanding that the prima donna be replaced with Susanna. He drugs the prima donna, thus enabling Susanna to sing in her place and attain success. When the prima donna recovers, she demands that Susanna be dismissed, charging that Nelson Eddy, the baritone, who loved Susanna, had drugged her so as to give Susanna an opportunity to sing. Rains murders the prima donna and renews his demands, threatening dire disaster as an alternative. Police Inspector Edgar Barrier, who, too, loved Susanna, takes charge of the affair. He orders the management to stage a performance that evening, but not to permit Susanna to sing. Infuriated, Rains cuts the cables supporting a huge chandelier, and it drops on the audience. He kidnaps Susanna during the confusion, taking her to his underground hide-away. Eddy and Barrier give chase, arriving in time to shoot Rains and save Susanna. The blast of the gun dislodges the ancient catacomb supports, and the "Phantom" is buried in the debris. Rescued, Susanna resumes her career.

Eric Taylor and Samuel Hofferstein wrote the screen play, George Waggener produced it, and Arthur Lubin directed it. The cast includes Steve Geray, J. Edward Bromberg, Fritz Feld and others. Morally suitable for all.

"Sleepy Lagoon" with Judy Canova and Dennis Day

(Republic, September 5; time, 65 min.)

Mediocre program fare. It may direct some appeal to the ardent Judy Canova fans, but others will find it tiresome. The story is far-fetched to the point of ridiculousness, and the comedy situations, which are of the slap-stick variety, are more to the taste of children than of adults. Dennis Day, popular singer on Jack Benny's radio program, sings several songs, but this does not help matters much.

The story unfolds in a small town booming with defense workers where Judy Canova is elected Mayor on an all-female reform ticket. To provide the workers with wholesome fun, Judy closes the town's undesirable amusement places and opens up an old amusement park. She asks Ernest Truex, her uncle, who was an old carnival man, to administer the park's affairs. Unknown to Judy, Truex was associated with Joe Sawyer and Douglas Fowley, racketeers. Seeing an opportunity to "cash in" on the proposition, Fowley compels Truex to accept the offer. While Truex operates the park on a respectable basis, Fowley secretly runs a gambling game in a tunnel beneath the park. The disgruntled ex-mayor of the town discovers the gambling joint and arranges with the sheriff to raid it. To protect himself, Fowley maintains that Judy had hired him to run the game. Judy is arrested but let out on bail. Knowing that Judy's uncle would testify in her behalf, Fowley disguises Truex as a clown and holds him prisoner. But Judy, with the aid of her women's civilian corps, rescues Truex, clears her administration of the charges, and turns Fowley over to the police.

Frank Gill, Jr. and George Carleton Brown wrote the screen play, Albert J. Cohen produced it, and Joseph Stanley directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Thank Your Lucky Stars" with an All-Star Cast

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 127 min.)

Good mass entertainment. The expensive production and the combination of Eddie Cantor and virtually all the Warner Brothers' stars and featured players should assure excellent box-office returns. The story is ordinary and unimportant; it is used as a framework for Cantor's gags and to tie together the musical numbers and the stars' specialty routines. It has a few slow moments, but for the most part it is a peppy entertainment with plentiful comedy, music, and dancing. Among those doing specialty numbers are Dinah Shore, who sings pleasantly; John Garfield in a song satirization of his "tough guy" reputation; Bette Davis in a sophisticated song number in which she dances with a "jitterbug"; Jack Carson and Alan Hale in an old-fashioned vaudeville song-and-dance routine; Willie Best and Hattie McDaniel in a lavish "Harlem" number; Errol Flynn as a cockney sailor, singing in an English pub; Olivia de Havilland, George Tobias, and Ida Lupino as a "jazzy" singing trio; Humphrey Bogart doing a brief comedy bit, in which he loses face as a "hard guy"; Alexis Smith in a dance number—all are very good. In addition there are songs by Eddie Cantor, Joan Leslie and Dennis Morgan. Edward Everett Horton and S. Z. Sakall contribute much to the comedy.

The story revolves around Cantor in a dual role—as Cantor, an obstreperous radio star, and as "Joe Simpson," a Hollywood tourist guide, whose dramatic ambitions are hampered, because of his close resemblance to Cantor. When the producers of a charity affair seek Dinah Shore for their show, Cantor, who had her under contract, agrees with a provision that he be appointed chairman of the affair. Joan Leslie, a song-writer, and Dennis Morgan, a singer, try to join the show, but Cantor vetoes the idea. With the aid of three friendly Indians, Joan and Morgan lure Cantor away from the theatre and arrange with "Simpson" to impersonate Cantor. Unaware that they were dealing with "Simpson," the producers agree to Joan and Morgan joining the show. Meanwhile Cantor escapes from the Indians, only to land in an asylum, where he is mistaken for a deranged patient. He finally escapes and reaches the theatre, but too late to prevent "Simpson" from singing a song and being acclaimed as the real Cantor.

Norman Panama, Melvin Frank, and James V. Kern wrote the screen play, Mark Hellinger produced it, and David Butler directed it. The cast includes Spike Jones and His City Slickers, Ruth Donnelly and Henry Armetta.

"Destroyer" with Edward G. Robinson and Glenn Ford

(Columbia, September 2; time, 97 min.)

Good! Combining melodrama with comedy and romance, "Destroyer" should have no difficulty pleasing most patrons, for, with the exception of the thrilling closing scenes, there is no battle violence. Its entertainment value lies in the comedy more than in the melodramatics. As a matter of fact, the plentiful comedy compensates for an otherwise formula story and treatment. Edward G. Robinson, as a retired Navy man who rejoins the service, is good; his feud with Glenn Ford, a modern sailor, is both amusing and dramatic. The romantic interest is pleasant:—

After helping to construct a new destroyer to replace the old John Paul Jones, on which he had once served, Edward G. Robinson, middle-aged welder, rejoins the Navy and, by clever maneuvering, is assigned to the new ship as Chief Mate, replacing Glenn Ford, who is made his assistant. Robinson, in his zeal for perfection, antagonizes Ford and the other crew members. Matters become complicated when Ford falls in love with Marguerite Chapman, Robinson's daughter. The ship fails on its shakedown cruise, and is relegated to carry mail. Resentful over Ford's remarks about the ship's ability, Robinson strikes him. Regis Toomey, the commander, who once served under Robinson, is compelled to demote him. Ford becomes Robinson's superior officer. En route to the Aleutians with mail, the Jones fights off an attack by Jap planes, but is damaged severely. Trained by a Jap submarine, Toomey, feeling his ship could not stand up in battle, orders the crew to abandon it. Robinson pleads for a chance to make emergency repairs. His request is granted and through his heroic efforts the Jones is enabled to attack and sink the sub. Robinson retires from active duty and gives his blessing to Ford's and Marguerite's marriage.

Frank Wead wrote the screen play, Louis F. Edelman produced it, and William A. Seiter directed it. The cast includes Edgar Buchanan, Edward Brophy, Leo Gorcey and others. Morally suitable for all.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

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A Motion Picture Reviewing Service
Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

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Columns, if it is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, AUGUST 28, 1943

No. 35

MORE ABOUT COLUMBIA'S BREACH OF FAITH

In last week's issue attention was called, first, to Columbia's failure to deliver ten of its top potential box-office pictures that had been announced last year as part of the 1942-43 season's product, and second, to its flagrant announcement that eight of these undelivered pictures would comprise an important part of its 1943-44 program. HARRISON'S REPORTS stated that it would endeavor to ascertain Columbia's attitude toward the request that it deliver to its 1942-43 contract-holders these ten promised pictures. At this writing, Columbia's attitude is still a mystery—there seems to be no Columbia official available for comment.

To those of you who contemplate making deals with Columbia for its 1943-44 product, a word of caution is necessary. This company is now soliciting contracts for the 1943-44 season on the basis of a printed prospectus entitled, "Columbia's 44 for 1943-44." This colorful prospectus, in very much the same manner as the one Columbia used to entice its customers to buy the 1942-43 product, gives a glowing account of the new season's offerings, listing by title, star, producer, or other identifying data sixteen productions of potentially outstanding box-office value. Included in these sixteen top pictures are the eight features Columbia promised but failed to deliver to its 1942-43 contract-holders.

These eight pictures served as an inducement to exhibitors to sign the 1942-43 contracts, and now Columbia is dangling them before you once again in order to get your signature on a 1943-44 contract. Perhaps you ought to think about the 1944-45 contracts. How many of these same eight top pictures, as well as of the other eight newly-announced top pictures, will be withheld from the 1943-44 contracts and offered again as an inducement to you sign a 1944-45 contract?

In one corner of the 1943-44 prospectus, over the signature of Abe Montague, Columbia's General Sales Manager, is the following statement: "Proud as we are of the record we are making we know that the future will exceed it."

Let us take a look at the record to see what Montague is so proud about.

For the 1942-43 season Columbia promised to deliver 48 features. Of these, it has thus far delivered 40 pictures—8 short of the number promised.

Included in the promised 48 pictures were 17 top potential box-office features, of which only 7 have been delivered and, of these 7, one—"City Without Men"—is no more than an ordinary program picture, although it has been allocated into the higher brackets. The other 10 top pictures have not been delivered.

To continue with the record, let us refer to a publicity release sent out by Columbia on June 16, 1942, in which it announced its production program for the 1942-43 season in glowing terms. Pointing out that "Columbia's 1942-43 program will offer the greatest number of top bracket productions in the company's history," the release states specifically that "four Rita Hayworth productions will be

among the top pictures for which Columbia will demand top terms during 1942-43." It lists also the company's line-up of stage and screen personalities, "greatest to be offered in Columbia's history," and makes a big splash about "entering the Technicolor field with two vehicles."

Following is a list of the 10 undelivered pictures, and the manner in which they were announced and described in the publicity release:

(1) "The American Way." According to Columbia, this successful George S. Kaufman-Moss Hart Broadway stage play was to be one of its outstanding box-office pictures, produced by George Stevens. Columbia asserted that the screen play would be written by Sidney Buchman, Academy Award winner, who had written the screen play for "Woman of the Year" and "Talk of the Town," both of which had been produced by Stevens. The combination of Buchman and Stevens, together with the fame of the stage play, constituted a juicy plum to dangle before the exhibitors, and, in all probability, impelled them strongly toward signing the contracts.

(2) "Cover Girl." Touted as "one of the company's big exploitation productions, pre-sold to 24,000,000 readers through the greatest active magazine tie-up in motion picture history," this production starring Rita Hayworth and featuring Janet Blair, Evelyn Keyes, Jinx Falkenburg and fifteen famous models, is another of the "inducers" withheld. Also, it is one of the two Technicolor productions announced, and the one that has not been delivered.

(3) "Defense Town," co-starring Rita Hayworth and Humphrey Bogart, with Harry Joe Brown as producer, is a magnet that helped draw many an exhibitor to the dotted line on the Columbia contract.

(4) "Miss Grant Takes Richmond," co-starring Rita Hayworth and Melvyn Douglas in a romantic comedy, is the third of the undelivered Rita Hayworth pictures, of which four were promised. As a group of four, these Hayworth productions gave credence to Columbia's claim that the 1942-43 season would be its greatest "big-picture" producing year. Having withheld the three aforementioned Hayworth pictures from the 1942-43 contract-holders, Columbia adds insult to injury by offering them once again as top productions for the 1943-44 season.

(5) A Cary Grant-Rosalind Russell production, described in the release as "re-uniting the memorable star combination of 'His Girl Friday' in an important production which will equal in story and directorial importance their previous vehicle," is one that any exhibitor would find hard to resist in deciding whether or not to sign a deal. While no such production was delivered in the 1942-43 season, two productions, one with Miss Russell and the other with Grant have been promised on the 1943-44 program. Since both stars were promised to the 1942-43 contract-holders, these two pictures rightfully belong to them.

(6) An Irene Dunne-Melvyn Douglas production is described as "one of the most important vehicles on the program." This, too, is undelivered. An Irene Dunne production is promised on the 1943-44 program, but, since the star

(Continued on last page)

"Johnny Come Lately" with James Cagney and Grace George

(United Artists, Sept. 3; time, 97 min.)

Very good entertainment. James Cagney's first independent production is a rousing comedy-drama, filled with heart interest, that should find favor with all types of audiences. Cast in a tough-and-ready role, the sort that will delight his fans, Cagney gives one of his customary forceful performances. The story, which takes place in 1906, revolves around a tramp reporter who temporarily gives up his "hobboing" to befriend a kind old lady, owner of a small-town newspaper, whose publication faced extinction because of the machinations of a crooked local politician. The plot is not unusual, but it has been directed with such skill, and is acted so agreeably by the leading players that one's interest is held tightly. Miss Grace George is exceptionally fine as the elderly woman-publisher; she succeeds in awakening sympathy for the character she impersonates. The scenes between Miss George and Cagney give the film many appealing moments. Marjorie Main, too, is worthy of mention; her characterization of a middle-aged dance-hall queen is about as lusty and comical a performance as has ever been brought to the screen. Hattie McDaniel, as Miss George's "bossy" colored housekeeper, provides many chuckles. Much credit is due William K. Howard, the director; through his expert directorial skill he has brought out the best there was in the players and, even though the story is simple, he has built up situations that are absorbing, appealing, thrilling, and humorous:—

Cagney, arrested for vagrancy, is saved from a jail sentence by Miss George, who promises the court that she will employ him as a reporter. She takes him to her home, where he learns from Hattie McDaniel, the cook, that Ed McNamara, a local politician, was trying to coerce Miss George into writing favorable editorials about him. Cagney offers to join the fight against McNamara, and Miss George appoints him managing editor. Her fading newspaper takes on new life as Cagney exposes McNamara's plundering of the town. The exposure causes a break between Marjorie Lord, Miss George's niece, and Bill Henry, McNamara's son. Failing in an attempt to buy Cagney off, McNamara gains control of a mortgage on the newspaper, threatening not to renew it when due. Cagney and Miss George determine to fight on. McNamara's henchmen shoot at Cagney and accidentally wound Miss George. The infuriated citizens form a Reform Committee and hang McNamara in effigy. Frightened by the fury of the people, and realizing that he stood between Marjorie and his son, McNamara agrees to give up the fight and leave town. His promise to Miss George fulfilled, Cagney leaves for the open road.

John Van Druten wrote the screen play from the story "McLeod's Folly" by Louis Bromfield. William Cagney produced it. The cast includes Robert Barrat, George Cleveland, and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Seventh Victim" with Tom Conway and Kim Hunter

(RKO, no release date set; time, 71 min.)

It is apparent that the producer meant this to be a mystery melodrama that is off the beaten track, but it emerges as no more than a mediocre program entertainment, and a confusing one at that. It is a fantastic story about a strange Greenwich Village cult that worshiped evil, and a search for one of its members, who, having violated the cult's code, is eventually impelled to commit suicide. Aside from the fact that the story is unpleasant and lacks clarity, it does have moments of suspense and a good deal of eerie atmosphere. For this reason it may get by with the avid mystery-picture fans:—

Disturbed by the mysterious disappearance of Jean Brooks, her sister, Kim Hunter leaves school to search for

her in New York. At a beauty parlor established by Jean, Kim learns that she had sold the business and that she had not been seen for many months. Eventually Kim meets Hugh Beaumont, a young attorney, who reveals that he is Jean's husband. He informs Kim that his only contact with Jean was through Tom Conway, a psychiatrist, who maintained that his wife was mentally ill and that it was unwise for him to see her. Kim and Beaumont go to an Italian restaurant in Greenwich Village, where Jean had last been seen. Through Erford Gage, a poet, who, too, knew Conway, they learn that Jean had rented a room above the restaurant, but that she never resided there. They examine the room, finding it bare except for a hangman's noose suspended from the ceiling. With Erford's assistance, Kim and Beaumont learn from Conway that Jean is a member of a secret cult, and that she is on the verge of insanity; she had violated one of the cult's rules, and the penalty was self destruction. Kim and Beaumont go through some harrowing experiences in their efforts to find Jean, but to no avail. Eventually they find themselves falling in love. It all comes to an end when Jean, succumbing to the urgings of the cult, visits the room above the restaurant, and hangs herself.

Charles O'Neill and DeWitt Bodeen wrote the screen play, Val Lewton produced it, and Mark Robson directed it.

Not for children.

"Hoosier Holiday" with Dale Evans and George Byron

(Republic, September 13; time, 72 min.)

Entertaining program fare. The story is inane, and if it were not for the musical interludes it would be boring. It will direct an appeal mainly to small-town audiences, because of the story's "hillbilly" quality, and to avid radio fans, because of the well-known radio performers who make up the cast. They include "The Hoosier Hot Shots," a novel instrumental and vocal quartet of the National Barn Dance radio program; "The Music Maids," a quartet of girlsingers heard weekly on Bing Crosby's radio show; George Hay, the "Solemn Old Judge" of the "Grand Ole Opry" radio show; Isabel Randolph, the "Mrs. Uppington" of the Fibber McGee and Molly show; and Lillian Randolph, the "Birdie" of the "Great Gildersleeve" radio program—all take a prominent part in the action. Proper exploitation of their names may be of considerable help at the box-office:—

George Byron and the four Hoosier Hot Shots, who work and live on a farm with Emma Dunn, their mother, try to convince the local draft board that their place is in the army and not behind the plow. Thurston Hall, rich and pompous head of the board, interpreting the regulations about farmers, refuses them permission to enlist. Miss Dunn, who had once been Hall's sweetheart, tries to use her influence with him, but to no avail. The arrival home from finishing school of Dale Evans and the Music Maids, Hall's daughters, gives the boys an idea. They decide to court the five girls in the hope that Hall would become mad enough to agree to let them enlist, thus preventing them from paying attention to his daughters. Hall, however, remains adamant, in spite of the fact that his daughters try to win him over to approve their new "heartthrobs." The girls, too, decide to use strategy. Unknown to the boys, they succeed in making arrangements with the Governor to bestow on them a patriotic-service flag for their outstanding work on the farm. The boys, noting that Hall was impressed, ask his permission to propose marriage to his daughters. To their astonishment he agrees. Realizing that their plan had boomeranged, the boys decide that fighting on the farm-front has its good points, if there are five lovely girls besides them to help.

Dorrell and Stuart McGowan wrote the screen play, Armand Schaefer produced it, and Frank McDonald directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Passport to Suez" with Warren William and Eric Blore

(Columbia, August 19; time, 72 min.)

"Passport to Suez" is another in the series of "Lone Wolf" program melodramas; in entertainment values, it is on a par with the other pictures and, in spite of the fact that the story is somewhat confused, should satisfy the action fans, for there is something doing every minute. This time Warren William, who enacts his usual role of "Michael Lanyard," dapper adventurer, tangles with Nazi spies and prevents them from destroying the Suez Canal. It has a fair share of thrills and, for the most part, holds one in suspense. Eric Blore is, as usual, comical in the role of William's butler, provoking laughs with his drolleries:—

Accompanied by Eric Blore, his butler, Warren William arrives in Alexandria and goes to the Yankee Inn, operated by Sheldon Leonard, his old friend. Leonard warns William that his place is a favorite rendezvous for spies. William, who had an appointment that evening with the Commandant of the Admiralty Office, is approached by a stranger who presents him with the Commandant's personal card and asks that he follow him. Taken for a mysterious ride, William is ushered into a darkened room where an unseen man warns him that he must follow all future instructions, lest Blore, who was his prisoner, be put to death. William agrees, and the unseen man releases Blore, permitting them both to leave. William visits the Commandant's office to report the incident. There he meets Lou Merrill. The Commandant indicates that Merrill is a British agent. Meanwhile Lieut. Robert Stanford, Blore's son, arrives in Alexandria with Ann Savage, his fiancée. Her strange actions arouse William's suspicions. He eventually learns that the unseen man who had threatened him was Gavin Muir, a Nazi agent, and that Ann, through her unsuspecting fiancée, had stolen from the Admiralty the plan of mine fields and defenses of the Suez Canal, intending to turn it over to Muir. William discovers that Ann was carrying the plan on the crystal of her watch, printed by means of micro-photography. Together with Sheldon, William rushes to her hotel room. Before they arrive, however, Merrill, who was actually a Nazi spy, kills Ann and steals the watch. He and Muir make their getaway in a fast car. William commandeers a plane and overtakes the fleeing agents. He kills them with the plane's machine guns, thus saving the defense plans.

John Stone wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and Andre de Toth directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The West Side Kid" with Donald Barry and Henry Hull

(Republic, August 23; time, 57 min.)

A pretty good human-interest program melodrama. The story is somewhat far-fetched, but it should prove entertaining to the average spectator. The action revolves around a wealthy publisher, who, wearying of his neglectful family, hires a gangster to have himself killed. The gangster's understanding of the publisher's problem, and his efforts to protect him from himself, are both amusing and heart-warming. Donald Barry, best known to most patrons as a Western hero, gives a very good account of himself as the ruthless gangster who turns soft. The film's chief fault is that it glorifies a gangster:—

Henry Hull, an elderly newspaper publisher, offers Donald Barry, a notorious gangster, \$25,000 if he will murder him. Hull explains that he is utterly tired of life, because Nana Bryant, his wife, was carrying on a flirtation with George Metaxa, a physician; Dale Evans, his daughter, created scandals changing fiancés often; and Peter Lawford, his son, was a lazy, hard-drinking young man. Convinced that Hull was serious, Barry accepts the assignment. He decides, however, to delay the "job," and determines to make Hull's family realize what a nice man they had for a father and husband. In the course of events he falls in love with Dale, and she with him. He hides Hull away on a farm,

and before long the family becomes worried about him; for the first time they begin to appreciate him. His wife realizes how callous she had been; his son actually finds a job and gives up drinking; and his daughter, for the first time, falls genuinely in love with Howard Banks, a successful young broker. Satisfied that the family was now on its best behaviour, Barry returns Hull to his home. He resigns himself to the fact that Dale would be happier with Banks and, after attending their wedding ceremony, he returns to his own set.

Albert Beich and Anthony Coldeway wrote the screen play, and George Sherman produced and directed it. The cast includes Walter Catlett, Chick Chandler, Matt McHugh, Edward Gargan, Chester Clute and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Holy Matrimony," with Monty Woolley and Gracie Fields

(20th Century-Fox; time, 87 min.)

A very good comedy drama. Nunnally Johnson's screen play, adapted from Arnold Bennett's story, "Buried Alive," is novel, and it should appeal both to class audiences and to the masses. The dialogue is witty, the treatment intelligent, and the acting and direction outstanding. Monty Woolley adds to his laurels; as a famous English painter, who assumes the identity of his dead butler in an effort to escape an adoring public, he wins one's sympathy, at the same time provoking hearty laughter by the predicaments he gets himself into. Gracie Fields, famous English comedienne, is a delightful surprise; as Woolley's wife, who marries him under the impression that he was a butler, she is human and appealing, thus proving her ability not only as a comedienne, but also as a fine dramatic actress. The closing scenes, which take place in a court room, are hilarious; there Miss Fields, resentful because the dead butler's wife claimed Woolley as her husband, reveals the masquerade:—

Because of his desire to keep out of the public's eye, Monty Woolley, famous English painter, lives in a jungle with Eric Blore, his butler. He is summoned back to England to be knighted. In London, Blore falls ill and dies. The attending physician mistakes the dead man for the famous painter, and Woolley, seeing an opportunity for peace and quiet, represents himself as the butler. Amidst great pomp the butler is buried in Westminster Abbey in the belief that he was the famous painter. Woolley tangles with the police when he attempts to attend the funeral, but he is saved by Gracie Fields, a widow, who identifies him as the butler. Later Woolley learns that Blore, while corresponding with her through a matrimonial agency, had sent her a photograph of both men, but had failed to identify himself. Miss Fields, believing that the painter had died, assumed that Woolley was her suitor. Impressed with Gracie's understanding nature, Woolley marries her. He leads an obscure life until Una O'Connor, whom Blore had deserted twenty-five years previously, visits him and asserts that he is the father of her three grown sons. Convinced that Woolley did not know the woman, Gracie cleverly disposes of her. Woolley confesses who he really is, but Gracie believes his story is fantastic. To prove his identity, he paints. As a result some of his paintings come into the hands of Laird Cregar, a London art dealer, who, recognizing them as Woolley's work, sells them to a wealthy client. The client, detecting a note of modernism in one of the paintings that could not have been painted by Woolley, since he was "dead," sues Cregar. To defend himself, Cregar searches for and finds Woolley, hailing him to court. Woolley denies his identity, but when Miss O'Connor testifies that he is her husband, Gracie, by showing the court two molts on his chest, proves that Woolley is the distinguished painter.

Nunnally Johnson wrote the screen play and produced it, and John Stahl directed it. The cast includes Alan Mowbray, Melville Cooper, Franklyn Pangborn, Fritz Feld, Montague Love and others.

Morally suitable for all.

was promised for 1942-43, this production rightfully belongs to the 1942-43 contract-holders.

(7) "Wild is the River," a production based on the best-seller novel by Louis Bromfield, serialized in *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, and published as a book by Harper, was certainly a promise of no mean proportions. Since Bromfield is one of the country's leading novelists, and since the picture was to be "produced with an all-star cast and a prominent director," exhibitors by the score must have been influenced to sign deals.

(8) "Knights Without Armor," starring Olivia de Havilland and Brian Aherne, produced by B. P. Schulberg and directed by Charles Vidor, is described as "a great drama of Europe's guerillas." It is another choice picture undelivered on the 1942-43 contracts, and now promised for the 1943-44 season.

(9) "The Return of Mr. Jordan," a sequel to "Here Comes Mr. Jordan," which was a huge success, is another "inducer" that never materialized. Harry Segall, who won the Academy Award for writing the first "Jordan" picture, was to have written the screen play for this version.

(10) "Salute to Sahara," a story about the heroic siege of Tobruk, produced by Harry Joe Brown and directed by Charles Vidor is another top production promised but not delivered. The film, which stars Humphrey Bogart, is completed, and its title has been changed to "Sahara." It is now offered as a top production on the 1943-44 program, and has been set for release in September. Why in the name of decency has Columbia failed to deliver this picture to its contract-holders?

The record shows also that among the more important stars promised but who do not appear in the released 1942-43 pictures are Humphrey Bogart, Olivia de Havilland, Melvyn Douglas, Irene Dunne, Cary Grant, Rosalind Russell, and Randolph Scott. There is no question that the presence of any of these stars in a picture is of prime importance at the box-office—another consideration that induced many exhibitors to sign Columbia contracts.

So there you have the record, but only insofar as 1942-43 is concerned, and even then it is incomplete; lack of space prohibits the telling of more.

What, then, is Abe Montague so proud about? He says of his company that "proud as we are of the record we are making we know that the future will exceed it." Will exceed it in what? In the number of top attractions Columbia will withhold in the future as compared with the past? Or in the number of such top pictures that Columbia will replace with low-bracket features shoved up into the higher brackets, thus raising the exhibitor's average cost per picture and preventing him from realizing the revenue commensurate with his cost? Montague should be more explicit.

The 1943-44 prospectus contains a statement, in very small type, to the effect that there may be changes and substitutions, but that the information is given in "good faith." Admittedly, under Columbia's selling policy, an exhibitor, in order to receive a fair deal, has to rely on the distributor's good faith. But the faith that one has in another is based on past performances, and, insofar as Columbia is concerned, its record for failing to keep faith with the exhibitors is terrifying.

Those of you who contracted with Columbia for its 1942-43 product did so on the basis of their prospectus, which, as stated in the Allied Resolution printed in last week's issue, "amounted to a representation that the attractions described therein would be delivered." Those of you who contemplate deals with Columbia for its 1943-44 product, will have to rely on the representations of its present prospectus.

In view of what has been pointed out here, one would indeed have to be naive to place much faith in Columbia's representations. For an exhibitor to have any faith in these representations, he would have to see them made a part of the contract.

Those of you who hold 1942-43 contracts should rise up and demand your rights. Make your feelings known directly

to Abe Montague, Harry Cohn, and other Columbia officials. Shower them with letters of protest against this flagrant breach of faith with you.

Those of you who intend to buy Columbia's 1943-44 product should make your feelings known to the salesmen by insisting that they put their company's promises above the signatures on the contract.

CORRECTIONS ON THE THIRD WAR LOAN PRESSBOOK

The Third War Loan Campaign Committee of the War Activities Committee advises that the pressbook mailed to exhibitors in connection with the Third War Loan drive starting September 9 contains some errors due to the speed with which it was gotten out.

The corrections are as follows:

(1) The Rosalind Russell subject is not a trailer and will not be handled by National Screen Service. Instead, it will be a clip attached to all newsreel releases prior to the opening of the campaign on September 9.

(2) National Screen Service will handle the gratis campaign trailer starring Corporal Alan Ladd.

(3) Usher sashes listed at \$.75 are \$.16.

A RESOLUTION AGAINST THE INCREASING NUMBER OF PERCENTAGE DEALS

Following is a resolution of the Board of Directors of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors adopted August 12, 1943 at its meeting in Baltimore:

"RESOLVED by the Board of Directors of Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors that the attention of the Attorney General be invited, in connection with the pending prosecution of the motion picture trust, to the increasing demands on the part of the distributors for the playing of pictures under percentage arrangements.

"Sec. XI, (par. 5) of the Consent Decree was designed to prevent the defendants from entering upon a general program of expanding their theatre holdings for a period of three years. The Attorney General already has been informed that despite that provision two of the defendants have acquired a total of approximately 125 theatres since the entry of the decree.

"In addition, the consenting defendants and all other distributors have steadily and relentlessly increased their demands in the matter of percentage engagements both in the number of pictures required to be played on that basis and in the percentages of gross receipts to be paid to them as film rental. Heretofore it has been possible for some exhibitors to license the features of some companies on a flat rental basis. Now there seems to be a determination on the part of all distributors, both consenting and non-consenting defendants and non-defendants also, that exhibitors shall be required to license at least some pictures on percentage from each company with which they do business.

"The Board respectfully reminds the Attorney General that when a theatre plays a picture on percentage the distributor forces itself into a strange form of partnership with the exhibitor whereby it assumes none of the liabilities but arrogates to itself all or a major part of the profits of the venture. From the standpoint of the anti-trust laws this policy is reprehensible inasmuch as, under percentage playing, the distributors seek to increase and protect their own revenue by requiring the theatres to observe fixed minimum admission prices, by dictating the days of the week on which pictures shall be played, by reserving the right to check the receipts and audit the books of the theatres and otherwise exerting control over the management and operations of the theatres. Thus in the matter of competition between theatres and enlargement of distributors' control and domination of the field of exhibition, the controls resulting from forced percentage playing differ in small degree from the form of control at which the Government's suit was aimed."

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

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No. 36

Your Chance To Be Heard!

In line with its announced plan to furnish the Department of Justice with the independent exhibitors' views on the failings of the Consent Decree, Allied States Association has dispatched to its members a four page questionnaire, the queries of which give the exhibitor an opportunity not only to cite specific instances of the abuses they are suffering at the hands of the five consenting distributors, but also to express their opinions on the decree's important provisions and to make suggestions.

Attached to the questionnaire is a letter signed by Abram F. Myers, Allied's General Counsel, in which he states that "as a result of an interview by representatives of Allied with United States Assistant District Attorney Tom Clark, it has been arranged so that the independent exhibitors can get their views before the Department of Justice and have them considered." Myers points out that this "is an important development and in contrast to the methods used three years ago when the views of the independent exhibitors were not solicited and a decree was foisted upon them which was contrary to their interests."

According to Myers, the courses of action open to the Department of Justice, after the Consent Decree expires this November 20, are: "(1) To continue the Consent Decree in its present form, either indefinitely or for a period of years. (2) Negotiate a new Consent Decree and enter it for a trial period. (3) Terminate the Consent Decree in its entirety and prosecute the pending suit against the Big Eight."

Although Allied's questionnaire is directed mainly to its exhibitor members, HARRISON'S REPORTS cannot stress too strongly the importance of having the Department of Justice receive similar views also from independent exhibitors who are not members of either Allied or other exhibitor associations. Hence, the full text of Allied's questionnaire is reproduced on the third and fourth pages of this issue, so that those of you who have not received a questionnaire may, nevertheless, state your views.

Read these instructions carefully. They are, in substance, the instructions issued by Mr. Myers with the questionnaire. Their observance is important, for the purpose of the questionnaire is to give you an opportunity to express your opinion on the important provisions of the decree, and to aid the Department of Justice in reaching a sound decision as to the course of action it should follow. You can help the Department reach such a decision by supplying it with definite, factual evidence concerning your experiences under the Decree. Consider each question carefully,

and make your replies accurate and in detail. If the information you furnish is to be of use, it must be specific. Therefore, all references to experiences with distributors should identify them by name, and approximate dates of the transactions should be noted. Bear in mind that the questionnaire relates only to occurrences since the entry of the Consent Decree, namely, November 20, 1940; also, it relates only to dealings with the five consenting companies, namely, Paramount, Metro, 20th Century-Fox, Warner Brothers, and RKO.

Put your answers on as many sheets of paper as you will require, identifying each answer with the number that corresponds to the question. If you have any doubt as to the meaning of any question, communicate with this office. When you have completed your answers, tear off the last page of this issue, which contains the questionnaire, and attach to it your answer sheet or sheets. Make sure that you sign the questionnaire in the space provided for that purpose, and that you enter your film delivery territory and the number of theatres you operate. Then mail it directly to Honorable Tom C. Clark, Department of Justice, Washington, D. C.

No exhibitor need fear that he may suffer reprisals because of any information he will furnish to the Department of Justice; Mr. Clark has given assurances that all information furnished by exhibitors will be kept in strictest confidence.

So that your file of HARRISON'S REPORTS will be complete, those of you who tear off the questionnaire may obtain a duplicate copy of this issue on request. If you know of an exhibitor who is not a subscriber to this paper, but who would like to file a questionnaire, tell him to write to this paper, and a copy will be furnished him immediately, without charge.

As pointed out by Mr. Myers, the willingness of Tom Clark to listen and give consideration to the independent exhibitors' views contrasts sharply with the Department of Justice's attitude three years ago, when suggestions and recommendations of the independent exhibitors were ignored in drafting the Consent Decree. For this reason you should avail yourselves of this opportunity to make known your feeling and experiences. The action that the Department of Justice will take in November concerns the future of every independent exhibitor. Your voice, added to the voice of every other independent exhibitor, will help determine what that action should be.

DON'T WASTE ANY TIME. COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE IMMEDIATELY.

"The Unknown Guest" with Victor Jory and Pamela Blake

(Monogram, October 29; time, 64 min.)

Very good program fare. It is a psychological melodrama, produced, directed, and acted with skill. It is the sort of picture your patrons will recommend to their friends, for, in entertainment values, it compares with the best of the "suspense" films offered by the majors in recent years. From the moment the picture opens until the closing scenes one is held in tense suspense since the main character is cloaked in an air of mystery, and one does not know in just what way his activities will be discovered. The action revolves around a hunted man who takes refuge in a hunting lodge operated by his aunt and uncle, only to find himself suspected of murder, because of their mysterious disappearance. There is not much to the story, but the treatment it has been given is what makes it impressive. While the surprise climax may prove disappointing to those who prefer to be "chilled," it does add an amusing touch to an otherwise somber tale:—

After seeming to be involved in a Chicago gang killing, Victor Jory leaves town and makes his way to a hunting lodge owned by his aunt and uncle (Nora Cecil and Lee White), a penny-pinching old couple. Jory arrives just as they close down their establishment preparatory to taking their annual winter vacation in St. Louis. When they refuse to help him, Jory chides the old couple about their stinginess, and forces them to feed him. On the following morning, Pamela Blake, a village girl who worked at the lodge as a waitress, finds the old couple gone and Jory in charge. Jory explains that they had gone on their vacation, leaving him to operate the place during the winter months. Pamela continues her work at the lodge, eventually falling in love with Jory, in spite of the fact that his mysterious attitude and suspicious movements convinced her that he had murdered his aunt and uncle. A real estate agent, seeking to buy some of the old couple's property, asks Jory for their St. Louis address. When Jory informs him that he did not know of their whereabouts, the realtor becomes suspicious. He checks with a St. Louis hotel, where the old couple habitually stopped during their annual vacation, and learns that they had not been there. Other circumstances lead the realtor to suspect that Jory had done away with his relatives. He informs the townspeople of his suspicions, rousing them to a point where they decide to move against Jory. To escape their wrath, Jory barricades himself in the cellar of the lodge. As the sheriff forces open the cellar door and arrests Jory, the elderly couple arrives. While Jory's aunt berates the sheriff for damaging her cellar door, his uncle explains that, instead of spending their usual dull vacation, he and his wife had taken Jory's advice and had gone to New York for a taste of Broadway night life.

John Faxon wrote the screen play, Maurice and Franklin King produced it, and Kurt Neumann directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Sherlock Holmes Faces Death" with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce

(Universal, September 17; time, 68 min.)

A fair "Sherlock Holmes" murder mystery melodrama; it holds the audience in suspense for not until the closing scenes is the identity of the murderer made known. The unravelling of the mystery is far-fetched, but it is in keeping with the amazing talents

of "Holmes," to whom the most baffling murder case is never more than elementary. The usual tricks have been employed to create an eerie atmosphere, such as an English manor in a deserted country section, a storm, and secret doors. As in the other "Sherlock Holmes" pictures produced by Universal, Basil Rathbone enacts the role of the master sleuth, and Nigel Bruce plays "Dr. Watson," the detective's blundering but genial friend:—

Summoned to Musgrave Manor, where Geoffrey Musgrave (Frederick Worlock), head of the house had been murdered, Sherlock Holmes (Basil Rathbone) and Dr. Watson (Nigel Bruce) learn that Captain Vickery (Milburn Stone) was suspected of the crime, because of a lovers' quarrel that had occurred between Sally Musgrave (Hillary Brooke), the dead man's sister, and himself. Holmes learns also that the manor was used as a sort of sanatorium for the rehabilitation of shell-shocked soldiers. Soon after Holmes' arrival, a mysterious attack is made on Dr. Sexton (Arthur Margetson), a physician who treated the soldiers. Holmes, during the course of his investigation, learns from Philip Musgrave (Gavin Muir), the dead man's brother and new head of the house, of an ancient family ritual that was observed by each succeeding head of the house upon the death of his predecessor. Holmes believes this ritual to be the key to the murder, as well as to a family secret of great value. Philip, too, is slain mysteriously, and Sally becomes the new head of the manor. Holmes takes careful notes of Sally's recitation of the ritual and discovers clues that eventually lead to his discovery of a subterranean crypt beneath the basement of the manor. There he finds the family butler (Halliwell Hobbs) murdered, a third victim of the mysterious killer. To catch the murderer, Holmes sets an ingenious trap, which leads Dr. Sexton to the crypt and causes him to expose himself as the triple-slayer. The doctor confesses that he, too, had solved the riddle of the family ritual, and that, from the solution, he had learned of ancient land grants that would make the house of Musgrave one of the richest in England. He had slain both brothers and the butler to get them out of his way, and had planned to marry Sally.

Bertram Millhauser wrote the screen play, and Roy William Neill produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

ALLIED THEATRES OF CONNECTICUT, INC.

902 Chapel Street
New Haven, Conn.

September 1, 1943.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

1270 Sixth Avenue
New York, N. Y.

Gentlemen:

Please accept our appreciation for your editorial on Columbia's failure to keep faith with the exhibitor. It may be possible for Mr. Montague to redeem his representations in the 1943-44 contracts, as a result of Allied's resolution, publicized and editorialized in your weekly reports.

We shall wait and see how far Columbia will go in their dealings and negotiations for the new product (listed in both the 1942-43 and 1943-44 contracts).

With best wishes for your continued support of our cause, I remain.

Very truly yours,

(signed) Maxwell A. Alderman
Executive Secretary

CONSENT DECREE QUESTIONNAIRE

Date....., 1943

Film Delivery Territory.....

Number of Theatres.....

I. QUESTIONS RELATING TO EXPERIENCES UNDER THE CONSENT DECREE

1. FORCING FEATURES. Has any distributor attempted, directly or indirectly, to force you to license any feature picture or group of feature pictures as a condition of licensing the feature or group of features that you wished to license? If so, give name of distributor, titles of pictures, approximate dates of each occurrence and any other details you may wish to add.

2. FORCING SHORTS. Has any distributor attempted, directly or indirectly, to force you to license short subjects, newsreels, trailers or serials as a condition of licensing its feature pictures? If so, give full details as called for in Question No. 1.

3. EFFECT OF FIVE PICTURE PLAN ON RUN. State in detail whether the five picture selling plan has had the effect, directly or indirectly, to endanger your established run; that is, have distributors used the five picture plan to sell away, or threaten to sell away, to a competing theatre on the same or later run in order to force you to pay higher film rentals than you are accustomed to pay? Give details.

4. HOW DO YOU PREFER TO LICENSE FEATURE PICTURES?

Please check one of the following, or else write in your individual views:

- (a) The five picture plan, with trade showings, as provided in the Consent Decree.
- (b) The selling of trade-shown pictures in such groups as the distributor and exhibitor may agree upon, with provision that the exhibitor may not be required to license pictures he does not want in order to get the pictures he does want.
- (c) The selling of trade-shown or adequately identified pictures in groups containing approximately one fourth of the annual output, with a 20% cancellation.
- (d) The selling of a full season's output, adequately identified, with a 20% cancellation.
- (e) Other method desired.

5. BLIND PRICING. Do you think (a) there should be a provision requiring either that prices and allocations be written into the contract or (b) that allocation be made upon notice of availability, or when the picture is booked, whichever is earlier? State preference and reasons.

6. SOME RUN OF PICTURES. Has any distributor refused directly, or indirectly, or for inadequate reasons, to license you pictures on "some run"? Give details, especially if terms demanded were calculated to deny you the run, that is, were in excess of those demanded in comparable situations.

7. CANCELLATION ON MORAL, RELIGIOUS OR RACIAL GROUNDS. Have you had occasion to request that any picture be cancelled for any of these reasons? Give details, including attitude of the distributor.

8. CLEARANCE. Has any distributor discriminated against you in the matter of clearance? If so, give details, including names of distributors and theatres involved, and whether theatre favored is an affiliated theatre—that is, a theatre in which a producer has a financial interest. Also state whether higher film rentals, or admissions, have been demanded in order for you to retain your clearance status.

9. WITHHOLDING PRINTS. Has any distributor arbitrarily withheld prints or shown preference to your competitor in making prints available? If so, give full details, stating whether or not your competitor is an affiliated theatre.

10. REFUSAL TO LICENSE PICTURES ON REQUESTED RUN. Has any distributor refused to license pictures to you on the run requested by you? If so, state why you think you are entitled to play on the run requested, give name of the distributor and of the theatre and date of refusal, and the reasons assigned or tactics employed by the distributor in denying your request.

11. THEATRE EXPANSION. (a) Has any distributor acquired or built a theatre in competition with you since November 20, 1940? If so, has it endangered your run, interfered with you in licensing pictures, increased clearance against you, or adversely affected you in any way? Give details.

(b) Has the Consent Decree permitted further expansion of the affiliated circuits in your territory—whether directly competitive or not? If so, give specific instances, locations, names of theatres, etc.

12. COMPULSORY BLOCK-BOOKING. Has the Consent Decree method of selling trade-shown pictures in small groups eliminated the evils of compulsory block-booking? Answer fully, being careful to state whether under the decree you have had to license feature pictures you did not want in order to license the ones that you did want.

II. ARBITRATION PROVISIONS

13. ARBITRATION. (a) If you have brought an arbitration proceeding under the decree, state in detail whether you obtained beneficial or satisfactory results, giving dates and nature of the award.

(b) If you have cause for complaint and have not brought a proceeding, explain in detail why you have not.

14. APPEAL BOARD. Check one of the following suggestions in reference to the Arbitration Appeal Board.

- (a) The Board should be abolished and the awards of the local arbitrators made final.
- (b) The Board should be replaced by local appeal boards composed of qualified arbitrators chosen from the panels.
- (c) The Appeal Board should be retained but there should be a change in personnel so that all will not reside in New York.

III. UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES

15. HIGH FILM RENTALS. Has the five picture plan had the effect unduly to increase your film rentals? If so, explain why you think the selling method was responsible, and state whether distributors have increased demands for percentage playing.

16. PREFERRED PLAYING TIME. Have distributors increased their demands for preferred playing time? If so, has this adversely affected your business; explain how. Also state whether this practice forces you to show unsuitable pictures on the days designated by the distributor, either from the standpoint of the public (i.e. unsuitable pictures on Sunday), or of boxoffice receipts.

17. HOARDING PICTURES. Has the policy of some distributors of withholding completed pictures from release created a picture shortage in your territory? If so, give details and explain adverse effect, if any, on your theatre.

18. ADDITIONAL FIRST RUNS—MOVEOVERS. Have the affiliated circuits created additional first runs, or increased move-overs (i.e. extended first runs in a different theatre)? If so, has this added to the picture shortage? Give details.

19. SELLING OUT TO THE CHAIN. If during the last three years you have sold a theatre to an affiliated circuit, or have entered into an operating arrangement with such a circuit, please give the name of the theatre and of the circuit and outline your reasons for making the deal.

20. DOUBLE-FEATURING "A" PICTURES. If you are confronted with a situation whereby pictures are licensed to affiliated theatres on a basis which enables them to play two "A" pictures on a single bill, and you are prevented from so doing because of the high percentages or flat rentals demanded for "A" pictures, give details including names of circuit theatres, examples of such double-billing of "A" pictures and state effect of the practice on your business.

21. WAR PICTURES. To what extent, if at all, have distributors sought, directly or indirectly, to force you to license any type of picture by intimations that your American loyalty or patriotism would be questioned, or your attitude made public, in the event you refused to do so? Give titles of pictures, names of distributors, and state whether pictures were distributed commercially, i.e., whether you were expected to pay film rental.

22. OTHER PRACTICES. Please write any additional trade practices which you think should be remedied by the decree, stating which distributors enforce them and how they affect your business.

Names of theatres operated and covered
by this report.

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Signed.....

For.....
(NAME OF FIRM OR CORPORATION)

Address.....

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Columns, if it is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1943

No. 37

CONDEMNED BY SILENCE

Widening its breach of faith with its customers, Columbia has announced that "Mr. Jordan Returns," a sequel to "Here Comes Mr. Jordan," which was an outstanding comedy-hit, has been added to its 1943-44 production schedule. This picture was announced originally as part of the 1942-43 season's product under the title, "The Return of Mr. Jordan," and it raises from eight to nine the number of top potential box-office pictures that Columbia promised but failed to deliver to its 1942-43 contract-holders, and which it is now dangling in front of the exhibitors as "inducers" for them to sign the 1943-44 contracts.

By this latest of its flagrant moves, and by its continued silence toward the request that it deliver to its 1942-43 contract-holders the so-called top potential box-office pictures promised to them, Columbia earns the right to be called, as Mo Wax, our contemporary, so aptly puts it, "the company of worthless promises."

For the past few weeks, since Columbia's utter disregard for its customers was brought to light by Allied, this office has contacted daily Columbia's home office requesting a statement from any one of its responsible officials regarding the company's intentions in the matter of pictures withheld from its 1942-43 contract-holders. That none of these officials has been either available or in a position to comment on the situation will not come as a surprise to most of you, for ducking the issue is in keeping with the business methods of their company.

Columbia stands condemned by its silence. Its failure to come forth with a statement of its intentions, or with a reasonable explanation of its failure to deliver product in accordance with the printed announcements that induced its customers to sign on the dotted line, denotes to exhibitors but one thing—that a Columbia representation is not worth the paper it is printed on, unless that paper happens to be a signed contract.

The record shows that fair play does not guide Columbia in its dealings with the exhibitors. It has promised for the 1943-44 season a total of 44 features, 16 of which it considers "AA" top-budgeted productions. Of these 16 so-called "AA" pictures, nine had been promised for the 1942-43 season and, after serving as bait for the exhibitors to sign the 1942-43 contracts, are offered again to those of you who are gullible enough to have faith in a Columbia promise.

Ask yourselves these questions before you make a deal with Columbia: How many of these 16 "AA" features will it deliver in 1943-44? How many of these 16 "AA" features will be withdrawn from the schedule and offered once more as an inducement for you to sign for the 1944-45 season's product? Bear in mind the fact that the record shows Columbia is now taking advantage of its 1942-43 contract-holders; also, it shows that it had taken advantage of its contract-

holders in previous seasons. Hence, on the face of the record, is there any reason to believe that it will not take advantage of its 1943-44 contract-holders?

There is only one way for you to deal with a company having Columbia's record: Make its salesman write his promises in the contract! This paper has often stated that, if the salesman is your friend, he should not object to such a procedure. If he objects to it, he is no friend of yours. Whether he is your friend or not, however, business prudence requires that the buyer make the seller put his representations into the contract. So you should do what in business is prudent.

* * *

Under the heading "The Promising Company," Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors has issued the following release dated September 7:

"A smart old Dutchman once said: 'Fool me once, shame on you! Fool me twice, shame on me!'

"Exhibitors have had fair warning on Columbia, 'The Promising Company,' and if they are fooled again they will have no one but themselves to blame.

"Every exhibitor association should supply each member with a copy of Allied's resolution dated August 12, a copy of HARRISON'S REPORTS for August 21 and August 28, and a copy of *Film Bulletin* for August 23, which tell the story of Columbia's unfilled promises for 1942-43.

"Then when the Columbia salesman comes around with his 1943-1944 announcement book and glib promises, each exhibitor should start reading, fast and loud, right in the salesman's face.

"This method should enable him to make a deal with Columbia, not on the basis of the big pictures promised, but on the basis of the kind of pictures that Columbia habitually delivers and which makes allowance for losses suffered last year in relying upon the announcement book and promises.

"We say this is the only way because Allied's resolution has been ignored and, we are informed, Columbia has not responded to any of the numerous exhibitor association or trade paper inquiries concerning its attitude on the subject.

"THANKS PETE AND MO

"It will be noted that we mention HARRISON'S REPORTS and Mo Wax's *Film Bulletin* as required reading on the subject. These publishers had the courage not only to publish the Allied resolution in full, but also to condemn Columbia for its unethical conduct.

"Exhibitors have learned to expect these honest and fearless publishers to speak out against injustice and deceit wherever they appear. But what of those sanctimonious publishers and editors who are so free with their criticisms of exhibitors and their organizations

(Continued on last page)

**"Larceny with Music" with Allan Jones,
Kitty Carlisle and Leo Carrillo**

(Universal, September 10; time, 64 min.)

A moderately amusing program comedy, with music, which follows the usual Universal pattern—"hot" music, singing, specialty numbers, and a meaningless story that lacks excitement and human appeal. Allan Jones and Kitty Carlisle sing several songs and handle the romantic interest; Alvino Rey and his popular orchestra furnish the music; and the King Sisters, a quartet, sing a few specialty songs—all are acceptable. William Frawley, as a scheming press agent, turns in an unusually good performance. It is a light entertainment, suitable mostly for young folk:

In a desperate attempt to obtain work for Allan Jones and Alvino Rey's orchestra, William Frawley, an agent, "cooks" up a scheme to make it appear as if Jones is a missing heir. Frawley hires Gus Schilling to pose as an attorney, and sends him to Leo Carrillo, owner of a swank night-club, to inquire if he knows anything about Jones, and to indicate that the singer is a "missing heir." Carrillo, on the verge of bankruptcy, falls for the scheme. Sensing an opportunity to cut in on Jones' supposed inheritance, Carrillo sicks out Jones and offers him a singing job at his club. Through Frawley's clever manipulations, Jones is kept in the dark about his being a missing heir, and a contract is signed with Carrillo, giving him a fifty percent share in Jones' "inheritance" in return for a fifty percent share in the club. As a result of Frawley's interference, Kitty Carlisle, singer with a string quartet, loses her job at the club. Jones, realizing that Kitty was furious at him, offers to get her a job with Rey's orchestra. But Kitty remains hostile. Meanwhile Schilling, threatening to reveal the scheme, continually blackmails Frawley. On the opening night, Schilling, unable to obtain more money from Frawley, goes to Kitty and reveals the truth. Kitty informs Carrillo, who sets out to kill Frawley and Jones. They and the orchestra escape from the club. Carrillo, however, soon finds himself in a jam; the wide publicity given to Jones' debut had drawn many customers. He sends Kitty after Jones and the orchestra. Kitty catches up with the boys and persuades them to return, after admitting her love for Jones.

Robert Harari wrote the screen play, Howard Benedict produced it, and Edward Lilley directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Wintertime" with Sonja Henie,
Jack Oakie and Cesar Romero**

(20th Century-Fox, September 17; time, 82 min.)

Entertaining. Although not very different from the previous Sonja Henie pictures, it should, primarily, please her fans, for her skating artistry has never been shown to better advantage. But the story is extremely thin and, at times, quite silly. It does, however, have many funny moments; Jack Oakie, as a glib press agent, and Cesar Romero, as an egotistic floor-show entertainer, provoke hearty laughter by their antics. S. Z. Sakall, too, is responsible for many laughs. Towards the finish, the comedy goes slapstick, with Romero running loose among fashionable guests,

clad only in long woolen underwear. In crowded theatres, these sequences should go over well. Woody Herman and his orchestra furnish the music, which is of the popular variety. In addition to her skating routines, Miss Henie does quite well in a dance number with Romero. The romantic interest is routine:—

Jack Oakie, fast-talking press agent for the Chateau Promenade, a broken-down, Quebec winter resort, owned by Cornel Wilde, overhears that S. Z. Sakall, a wealthy Norwegian, and Sonja Henie, his niece, are about to take a trip to the Chateau Frontenac, a swanky winter resort. By clever maneuvering, Oakie, without their knowledge, manages to switch their reservations from the Frontenac to the Promenade. Soon after the wealthy visitors arrive, Wilde confesses to Sonja that she and her uncle had been tricked into coming to his hotel. Impressed with his sincerity, Sonja offers to help him. She concocts a plan with Oakie and Wilde to persuade her uncle to buy the hotel and turn it into a ultra-swank resort. The scheme works. Sonja, who had fallen in love with Wilde, becomes jealous when he is monopolized by Helene Reynolds, a newspaperwoman covering the hotel's opening. She quarrels with Wilde. Matters take a turn for the worse when news comes of Germany's invasion of Norway, and of the order freezing the funds of Norwegians in Canada. Sonja, to help her uncle, decides to accept an offer from a New York producer to join his ice show as a professional skater. In order that she be permitted to enter the United States, Sonja proposes marriage to Cesar Romero, a vain American performer with Woody Herman's orchestra. Oakie, learning of her plan, and knowing that both Sonja and Wilde were madly in love with each other, sets about to bring the two together. By hiding Romero's clothes, and informing Carol Landis, Romero's fiery sweetheart, of the plan, Oakie manages to prevent the marriage and to reconcile Sonja and Wilde. The hotel becomes a successful enterprise, thus solving Sakall's difficulties.

E. Edwin Moran, Jack Jevne, and Lynn Starling wrote the screen play, William Le Baron produced it, and John Brahm directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Always a Bridesmaid" with the
Andrews Sisters, Patric Knowles
and Grace McDonald**

(Universal, September 24; time, 61 min.)

Like most of the Universal comedies with music, this, too, has an inconsequential story, depending on the specialty numbers to liven up the proceedings; it should get by as a supporting feature in situations where this type of entertainment has proved acceptable. Songs by the Andrews Sisters, and "jitterbug" dance numbers by the "Jivin' Jacks and Jills," should please the younger trade. For comedy there is the blustering antics of Billy Gilbert and the drolleries of Charles Butterworth—both do well. Grace McDonald and Patric Knowles take care of the unimportant romantic angle:—

Both Patric Knowles, assistant district attorney, and Grace McDonald, a woman detective, investi-

gate a matrimonial club operated by the Andrews Sisters. They suspect that crooks are using the organization to mulct unsuspecting members. Unaware of each other's identity and purpose, Grace poses as a lonely girl in search of romance, and Knowles misrepresents himself as a Westerner, who, too, was lonely. Each suspects the other. At a club party, Knowles overhears Charles Butterworth, a member, boast of his new rubber formula to Edith Barrett, a wealthy widow, who offers to finance him. Certain that Butterworth is a crook, Knowles evinces great interest in the formula and indicates to Butterworth that he, too, would like to finance him. Meanwhile Grace, who had noticed what had transpired between Butterworth and Knowles, becomes suspicious of both. Knowles eventually falls in love with Grace and confesses his identity. Grace, however, doubts him, believing that his confession was part of his crooked game. A special party is staged for Butterworth and Edith when they announce their engagement. Butterworth uses the party to sell stock in his "phony" enterprise. Sensing his opportunity to get concrete evidence against Butterworth, Knowles buys some stock, paying him in marked bills. But before Knowles can act, Grace, aided by city detectives, arrests Butterworth and Edith, exposing them as two notorious crooks. She orders the arrest of Knowles, but the detective decline, revealing his identity. It all ends with Grace in Knowles' arms.

Ken Goldsmith produced it, and Erle C. Kenton directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"First Comes Courage" with Merle Oberon and Brian Aherne (Columbia, July 29; time, 85 min.)

"First Comes Courage" emerges as no more than a moderately interesting war melodrama, for the theme—resistance against the Nazis by the Norwegian underground—has been done many times. Its box-office chances will have to depend on the drawing power of Merle Oberon and Brian Aherne. The story does have a few new angles, but the treatment is routine and, for the most part, the pace is slow and it lacks excitement. There is a thrilling Commando raid toward the finish, but even this fails to impress for it follows a usual pattern. No fault can be found with the performances:—

Because of her friendly attitude toward Carl Esmond, Commandant of the German garrison, the townspeople of Stavik suspect Merle Oberon of being a "Quisling." Actually, she used his infatuation for her as a means of obtaining valuable military information, which was relayed to the British by the Norwegian underground. Threatened with disgrace unless he learned how the British got their information, Esmond begins to suspect Merle. She informs the underground of his suspicions, and this information is transmitted to the British. Brian Aherne, a Commando officer, who had a brief romance with Merle before the war, is sent to Stavik to dispose of Esmond. Aherne reaches Stavik, but he is wounded, captured by the Nazis, and taken to a hospital. Merle enlists the aid of a Norwegian nurse, who helps Aherne to escape and hide in the cellar of Merle's home. Esmond's superior officer criticizes him severely, indicat-

ing that Merle may have had a hand in Aherne's escape. To show that Merle was loyal to him, Esmond announces that she intends to marry him. Merle agrees to the marriage to prove herself to him. Immediately following the marriage ceremony, Esmond tricks Merle into revealing her position. He threatens to kill her, but she is saved by the timely arrival of Aherne, who shoots Esmonds. Taking Esmond's body with them, Merle and Aherne use the dead man's car and head for a spot on the Norwegian coast where a group of British Commandos were expected to blow up Nazi oil installations that night. They meet the Commandos and Aherne begs Merle to return to England with him. Merle, however, decides to remain in Norway until after the war, lending aid by carrying on her espionage.

Lewis Meltzer and Melvin Levy wrote the screen play, Harry Joe Brown produced it, and Dorothy Arzner directed it. The cast includes Fritz Lieber, Reinhold Schunzel, Isobel Elsom and others.

Morally suitable for all.

MAIL THE CONSENT DECREE QUESTIONNAIRE IMMEDIATELY

Have you yet filled in and returned your Consent Decree Questionnaire? If you have not, do so at once.

The future of the Decree in your most immediate problem. The questionnaire gives you an opportunity to express your opinion on the Decree's important provisions, and to aid the Department of Justice in reaching a sound decision as to the course of action it should follow when the Decree expires on November 20.

It is your duty to send in the questionnaire at once, for it means the preservation of not only your own interests, but also the interests of your brother-exhibitors.

REFUNDING WAR DAMAGE PREMIUMS

The following is from an Allied States Association bulletin dated September 7:

"Large city exhibitors doubtless have taken out War Damage Insurance—if they have not, they ought to. The danger of conflagration losses from the bombing of large cities still remains. As the plight of the Axis powers grows worse, they may become desperate and resort to spite raids. These would have no bearing on the outcome of the war but might, nevertheless, inflict considerable damage.

"It seems likely that the end of the war will see a large surplus built up in the War Damage Corporation, a branch of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The question arises, shall this fund be covered into the Treasury for the benefit of all taxpayers, or should it be refunded to the policyholders?

"Exhibitors holding such policies will be glad to learn that a bill (H.R. 2900) has been introduced by Congressman Charles L. Gifford (Rep. Mass.) to provide for the refunding of premiums, pro rata, among the policyholders after the termination of the war. The bill is now pending in the Committee on Banking and Currency of the House of Representatives.

"If interested, write your Congressman."

but are less vocal than a clam when the conduct of one of the major companies is brought in question?

"Those who would be a power for good dissipate their influence and create distrust of their publications when they ignore such flagrant cases as that of Columbia simply because that company is a good advertising account and the subject is too hot to handle."

HERE AND THERE

ACCORDING TO THE *Hollywood Reporter*, Paramount may have to rewrite the script of "Rainbow Island," because Dorothy Lamour, the star of the picture, has complained about the story, as well as about having to wear a sarong.

Miss Lamour's complaint, states the *Reporter*, "is based on kindly ribbing she has taken in her fan mail from south Pacific soldiers who have seen no Lamour or sarongs around."

Judging from the type of stories Miss Lamour has been given in the past, we are inclined to feel that there is justification to her complaint.

In its July 18, 1942 issue, this paper cautioned Paramount against endangering one of its most valuable assets, meaning, of course, Miss Lamour. We said then that "Dorothy Lamour's potential value to the industry in the next ten years is at least \$20,000,000. But she is tossed off in a picture with a carelessly prepared story and fed to the public without regard to the preservation of that precious value." The picture in question was "Beyond the Blue Horizon," which was made from a story not worthy of Miss Lamour's talents.

Perhaps Miss Lamour's stand will bring Paramount to the realization that, unless greater care is taken to create stories of interest and entertainment, tailored to suit her particular personality, the public, which has for long showered her with its idolatry, may become indifferent to her. In such a case, the exhibitors, as well as Paramount, will be the losers.

* * *

IN A RECENT BULLETIN issued by the Allied Independent Theatre Owners of Pennsylvania, Sidney E. Samuelson, business manager of that organization, has something interesting to say relative to L. C. Griffith, who, under the auspices of the War Activities Committee, has been appointed general chairman of the motion picture industry's participation in the Third War Loan drive. Though treating of a delicate subject, Mr. Samuelson has handled it in good taste, without in any way impairing the effectiveness of the industry's war effort.

The statement follows in part:

"The importance of this campaign is so great that every exhibitor will do his best regardless of who directs the effort or who receives credit for the results. Nevertheless, great care should have been exercised in selecting the leaders in order that they might be above suspicion of capitalizing in any way upon the opportunity afforded them. It is for this reason that many independent exhibitors have noted with regret the selection of L. C. Griffith as general chairman of the motion picture industry for the drive. Undoubtedly Mr. Griffith is a man of unusual business ability and in that respect is admirably equipped to lead the campaign. But those who selected Mr. Griffith evidently gave no thought to the fact that Griffith Amusement Company, of which he is head, and Mr. Griffith himself, are defendants in a pending suit by the Government under the Sherman Act.

"We do not believe that Mr. Griffith will seek

special consideration from the government in return for the services which he will render as general chairman of the drive. We do not believe that Mr. Griffith or other men in the industry who also are involved in similar proceedings and who have rendered meritorious service in the war effort will be given special consideration even if they should ask for it. Nevertheless, we hope that the day will come when those who hand out these chairmanships will honor some of the many able independent exhibitors concerning whom there cannot be a shadow of a doubt as to their complete disinterestedness. And when and if such a man is so designated, we shall certainly expect the producers, distributors and circuit heads to yield him the same loyalty and enthusiastic support which the independent exhibitors will lend Mr. Griffith in carrying the Third War Loan drive to a successful conclusion."

Mr. Samuelson's remarks are well taken, and should be considered carefully by government agencies when they make appointments in the future. Nevertheless, we all have a job to do now. It may be regrettable that the chairman is at the same time a defendant in a government suit. Yet he does not stand condemned. His motives in this Bond Drive cannot be impugned. That he will exert all his efforts toward making the drive a success is beyond question.

HARRISON'S REPORTS urges that each of you give Mr. Griffith your whole-hearted cooperation to help attain the \$15,000,000,000 goal of the Third War Loan drive.

* * *

UNDER THE NOT VERY flattering heading, "A Bouquet of Stinkweeds to 'Motion Picture Herald,'" Pete J. Wood, secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio and State Chairman for Ohio for the sale of Third War Loan bonds, lets loose the following blast against that trade paper:

"Because of a slight misunderstanding between the undersigned and the publisher of *Motion Picture Herald*, the latter exploded his venom upon every theatre owner in Ohio by purposely omitting from page 14 of the August 28th issue of the *Herald* the name of the undersigned as State Chairman of Ohio.

"About the only contribution (?) that this publication has made to the Third War Loan campaign are the outstanding ads of the film distributing companies, for which the publication undoubtedly was paid regular advertising rates. As against this, this organization and the undersigned are devoting time, energy, and money to further the sale of the Third War Loan bonds, and are very happy to do so.

"If this action by the *Herald* is an indication of its patriotism, the publisher must be a lousy American."

While this paper deplores the abusive language Pete Wood has used in his tirade against the *Herald*, the fact remains that he is justified in complaining.

An examination of the August 28 issue of the *Herald* discloses that it went to great pains to publicize the different State chairmen and co-chairmen in charge of the Third War Loan drive, identifying 43 of them through photographs, and nine by the listing of names. The only chairman not identified by either photo or name is Pete Wood. All other trade papers that listed these chairmen included Wood. It is obvious that the omission of Pete Wood by the *Herald* was purposeful.

HARRISON'S REPORTS deems it unfortunate that the *Herald*, because of a personal issue has denied credit to a man who is putting his heart and soul into a work that rises far above any controversy between the *Herald* and himself.

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THAT RECURRING CRY FOR SELF-REGULATION

In a bulletin issued recently by M.P.T.O.A. and reported by the trade press, Ed Kuykendall, president of that organization, advocates self-regulation as a means by which industry problems should be solved. "If the Department of Justice really wants to remove the genuine abuses and prevent the real and important injustices in the motion picture industry," states Kuykendall, "they should throw the Consent Decree out the window and show a sympathetic attitude towards intra-industry cooperation and honest and sincere attempts to work out our difficult, complex and irritating problems by negotiation and agreement within our own industry."

That some sort of self-regulation within the industry would remedy many of the existing evils, is, of course, too well known. But, as this paper has often times stated, if a self-regulation plan is to be adopted, it certainly should not be one promulgated and fostered by an organization that is the property of the producer-distributors, who subsidize it for the express purpose of using it as a front to fool people into believing that it speaks for independent exhibitors.

It is about time Kuykendall woke up to the fact that there comes a time when the recurring cry of self-regulation loses its power to impress those who are striving sincerely to remedy the undeniable evils in the industry. Too many times have exhibitor leaders been duped into giving up their programs for securing reforms, merely because they succumbed to the pleas that they forget the past and enter into conferences with the producer-distributor representatives for the purpose of working out a system of self-regulation. Whenever these conferences took place the producer-distributors were so lacking in sincerity that even some of their own representatives—men who were honestly and courageously working to bring about harmony and unity—were themselves misled and discouraged.

There is no need to enumerate the many intra-industry conferences that were held. They are all well known to you. While nothing was ever accomplished at these conferences, they did prove to exhibitors that, although a fair, practicable system of self-regulation was highly desirable and could achieve much good, there was little hope of evolving such a system so long as the major companies went riding merrily on their way, promising to negotiate with exhibitors only when it seemed that drastic restrictions might be imposed on them by some government agency. Even the most pa-

tient exhibitor realized after a while that the producer-distributor's invitation to self-regulation, issued in the past, as now, through Ed Kuykendall, was nothing more than an attempt to substitute conversation for accomplishment. No, Ed, your cry of "wolf" has been heard once too often.

Elsewhere in the bulletin Kuykendall states that theatre divorcement is an issue the M.P.T.O.A. is not called upon to fight. He adds: "We have no intention of becoming involved in the argument between the circuits and their avowed enemies. But we do resent having this issue made into a political football by those who candidly admit that if theatre divorcement were fully achieved, it would accomplish exactly nothing for the benefit of independent exhibitors—on the contrary, would probably make his lot much harder from unfair competition than it ever was with the affiliated circuits operating the competing theatres. Nor do we relish the idea of the government's using it as a constant threat to beat this industry into submission on other matters.

"If court action or legislation can be used to prevent abuses and injustices, let it be aimed at the abuses that should be removed, and let the case be tried on its merits, even if that requires filing an entirely new lawsuit in place of the present litigation. Anyhow, we have our doubts that any big government anti-trust suits are going to be tried while the war is on, come what may."

Kuykendall should be more specific. Who are those "who candidly admit" that theatre divorcement will not benefit the independent exhibitor? As for his statement that his organization has no intention of becoming involved in the argument between the circuits and their "avowed enemies," it would be absurd to think otherwise; the M.P.T.O.A. is composed mostly of theatre managers of circuits controlled or owned by the producers and distributors, and approximately eighty percent of the dues by which this organization is financed comes from these theatres. In other words, for them to agree to divorcement of their theatre properties would be as fantastic as for them to agree to the amputation of their right hands.

The record shows that, in the past, every attempt to work out a system of self-regulation has been marked by a display of insincerity, bad faith, and personal selfishness on the part of the producer-distributors. Moreover, they utilized the M.P.T.O.A. for a specific purpose—to make the bonafide independent exhibitors appear as divided.

Let us not be deceived by Ed Kuykendall and the interests he represents.

"Tiger Fangs" with Frank Buck

(PRC, September 10; time, 58 min.)

Mediocre program fare. It is a far-fetched jungle melodrama dealing with a Nazi plot to kill natives on a rubber plantation to impede the movement of rubber to the Allies. There is not much to the plot, and the direction and acting are amateurish. A good deal of the footage is devoted to stock shots of animal life. There is some excitement towards the finish when the spies are captured, but it is old-fashioned melodramatics, the sort that are more to the taste of children than of adults:—

Shortly after Pearl Harbor, Frank Buck receives an assignment to investigate a serious labor situation in a rubber producing section "somewhere in Asia." Arriving in Penang, Buck meets Duncan Renaldo, an American, who tells him that the natives are terrified at a scourge of killings by unusually ferocious tigers, causing the gathering and curing of rubber to come to a standstill. Together with Renaldo, Buck heads for a rubber plantation owned by J. Farrell MacDonald, a shrewd Scot. There Buck meets Arno Frey, resident physician; Jane Duprez, MacDonald's granddaughter, and assistant to Frey; and Howard Banks, the plantation overseer. After discussing the seriousness of the situation, Buck and Renaldo leave for the jungle. They come upon unbaited tiger traps belonging to Dan Seymour, an animal trader, who had a compound in the jungle. They visit the compound, and come upon Pedro Regas, Seymour's Eurasian aide, tormenting a caged tiger. Seymour explains that the killing of so many natives had infuriated his aide. Later, Buck captures a tiger in one of the many traps set by his native boys, and discovers a poisoned dart in the rump of the animal. Buck sends Renaldo to the plantation to have the dart analyzed, but the doctor, who was actually a Nazi spy in league with Seymour, steals the dart before June can analyze it. Buck deduces that Seymour and the doctor were behind the scheme to sabotage the rubber production. He succeeds in killing a ferocious tiger, finding in it another poisoned dart. At the laboratory, Buck confronts Frey. The doctor tries to shoot his way free, but a dart blown by his aide and aimed at Buck misses the explorer and lodges in the doctor's throat, killing him. Seymour, fleeing through the jungle, is killed by an infuriated elephant. His mission accomplished, Buck returns home.

Arthur St. Claire wrote the screen play, Jack Schwarz produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Top Man" with Donald O'Connor,
Susanna Foster and Richard Dix**

(Universal, October 1; time 82 min.)

This is by far the best of the Universal comedies, with music, which revolve around 'teen age youngsters. Throughout its eighty-one minutes there is never a dull moment. Credit for this is due Donald O'Connor whose versatility has never been shown to better advantage. He dominates the scene throughout, and this is all for the better, since the story, though timely and adequate, places little strain on the imagination. A monologue by Donald, on how the modern dance steps came into being, is an extremely comical sequence. Aiding and abetting Donald in this potpourri of songs, dances, and witty remarks is Peggy Ryan, who might well be labeled a junior "Betty Hutton"; like Donald, her future, too, is bright. Susanna Foster furnishes the romantic interest and sings several songs pleasantly. Count Basie's orchestra and Borrah Minnevit's Harmonica Rascals provide the music. A highlight is the singing of a colored quartet, headed by Bobby Brooks, a boy-soprano. The production values and the cast are better than average:—

Because he shows more interest in building model planes than in his school work, Donald O'Connor's parents (Lillian Gish and Richard Dix) and his sisters (Peggy Ryan and

Ann Gwynne) harp on him. Donald finds a new interest when Susanna Foster moves into the house across the street, but he encounters competition from David Holt, the town's "Beau Brummel." When Donald's father, a flier in the last war, is recommissioned in the Navy, Donald becomes the "man of the family." Shouldering this new responsibility, Donald undergoes a great change. He studies hard at school, watches out for the best interests of his mother and sisters, and spares little time for frivolity. In an attempt to patch up a lover's quarrel between Anne and Noah Beery, Jr., her fiancé, Donald visits the aircraft plant where Beery was employed. There he meets Samuel S. Hinds, president of the plant and, unknown to Donald, Susanna's uncle. Donald learns from Hinds that the plant's production was falling off because of the shortage of help. He offers to work after school hours, and hits upon the idea of enlisting the spare-time help of his junior college cronies. He meets with opposition because his plan interfered with the college show rehearsals, but he finally wins them over. As a result of the aid by Donald and his friends, the plant qualifies for the Army and Navy "E" award. Hinds schedules a celebration to commemorate the award. He invites Donald and his friends to stage their college show as part of the celebration. At the climax of the presentation, Donald is called to the rostrum and, to his surprise, his father presents him with an honorary Navy pin for his services in initiating the plan. Donald gallantly pins the award on Susanna.

Zachary Gold wrote the screen play, Milton Schwarzwald and Bernard Burton produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Nearly Eighteen" with Gale Storm,
Bill Henry and Rick Vallin**

(Monogram, November 12; time, 61 min.)

Fair program entertainment. The story is not particularly exciting or novel, but it has some good human touches, comedy, and music. It is somewhat slow-moving and a bit implausible, but it manages to hold one's attention because of the sympathy one feels for Gale Storm, the heroine. She has a pleasant personality and sings popular songs in nice style. Several of the melodies are catchy. The romantic interest is pleasant:—

Because she is under eighteen years of age, Gale Storm is refused a singing job in Luis Alberni's cafe. Alberni gives her a card of introduction to Rick Vallin, who operated a gambling establishment, and informs her that she can secure a secretarial position there. Gale, unaware that Vallin was a gambler, is arrested when police raid the office. Vallin escapes. At police headquarters, Gale is fined fifty dollars. When she catches up with Vallin and demands her fifty dollars, Vallin soothes her feelings by informing her that she has talent, and by arranging for her to visit Bill Henry, operator of a singing and dancing school for children. Gale, realizing that she is too old for the school, disguises herself as a fourteen-year-old girl. Impressed with her talent, Henry gives her special attention and soon falls in love with her. He gives her an opportunity to join a radio show, but she is compelled to give it up when she realizes that her age will be revealed, because of her parents' signatures required on a work permit. She tries to leave the school without being seen, but Henry catches her and denounces her. Gale reaches her eighteenth birthday, and Vallin finds a job for her in a night-club. He, too, falls in love with her. On opening night, Gale becomes frightened at the thought of singing to an audience. Vallin sends his henchmen to fetch Henry. Upon reaching the night-club, Henry reassures Gale, and she gives a splendid performance. Vallin, realizing that the two were in love, takes his leave.

George Sayre wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Arthur Driefuss directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Flesh and Fantasy" with Charles Boyer,
Edward G. Robinson and
Barbara Stanwyck**

(Universal, October 29; time, 93 min.)

Good. Done in a manner that is somewhat reminiscent of "Tales of Manhattan," this drama is a compilation of three inter-related stories, each based on a mystic theme. The picture has been produced artistically, and it should direct a particular appeal to class audiences, as well as to those who seek something different in screen entertainment. Whether or not it will appeal to the masses is questionable; although it has some bright comedy here and there, for the most part, it is not a cheerful entertainment. The aggregation of popular stars, however, should be of considerable help at the box-office. There is quite a bit of suspense in the situations where Charles Boyer, as a tight-wire performer, loses his nerve while on the wire. In addition to acting in the picture, Mr. Boyer co-produced it. The production values are very good.

The story opens with Robert Benchley in a dilemma; a fortune-teller had told him that something would happen to him, and during the night he dreamt the opposite. In a quandary as to whether to believe the dream or the fortune-teller, Benchley is approached by a friend who tells him some stories to prove that he could believe neither the dream nor the fortune-teller and still retain the mastery of his own destiny.

Thus the first episode begins at a Mardi Gras. In the crowd are Betty Field, ugly and slovenly, and Robert Cummings, a young student, whom she secretly loved. Ignored by him, Betty heads for the river. She is restrained from drowning herself by a bearded old man (Edgar Barrier), who insists that he can make her beautiful. He takes her to his mask-making shop where he tells her to select the most beautiful face, and to join in the festivities. He warns her to return the mask by midnight. Betty hastens home and dons a costume she had made for Marjorie Lord, her beautiful sister. On her way to a cafe, she meets Cummings who becomes hypnotized by her grace and beautiful mask. He falls madly in love with her, and follows her to the mask shop at midnight. She fails in her efforts to convince him that she is ugly underneath the mask. When he removes the mask her face is revealed as lovely. As he takes her in his arms, a beardless man, who claimed that he owned the shop, orders them to leave. As they pass the window display, the mask of the bearded old man smiles.

In the second episode the scene shifts to London where Edward G. Robinson, a prominent attorney scoffs openly at mysticism until Thomas Mitchell, a palm reader, displays convincing powers of divining the past and future. When he is told by Mitchell that murder is written in his hand, an obsession grips Robinson. He becomes the tool of a torturing inner voice that goads him to kill. He postpones his marriage to Anna Lee, feeling that he must first commit a murder to free himself from his "curse." Half demented, Robinson selects Lady Dame May Whitty, who had introduced him to Mitchell, as his victim. His careful plans fail when she dies a natural death. Tortured, he next makes an abortive attempt to kill the Dean of Norwalk (C. Aubrey Smith). Frantic for a victim, Robinson comes unexpectedly upon Mitchell and kills him. The police capture him when, pursued, he is run down by a truck.

In the third episode, Charles Boyer, a tight-wire circus performer, relaxes in his dressing room prior to his appearance. In a dream, Boyer has a vision of falling off the high wire, while the stricken face of a woman vividly looms before his eyes. Boyer, though shaken by the dream, prepares for the act. As he moves out on the wire, the face of his dream obsesses his senses, and he is unable to continue. Charles Winninger, his manager, pleads with him to give up the act. Boyer demurs, but he realizes that he now lacked courage and confidence. Boarding a ship for an American engagement, Boyer meets Barbara Stanwyck, the woman of his vision, who is mystified by his story. Both fall in love, but Barbara is unaccountably secretive and afraid of something she refuses to disclose. Disturbed, Boyer dreams that

something will happen to her. They part at the dock, and Barbara promises to see his act that evening. With Barbara in the audience, Boyer regains his old confidence. Barbara, while making her way to Boyer's dressing room is intercepted by detectives and arrested as a jewel thief. Satisfied that she had helped Boyer regain his courage, she bids him goodbye.

Ernest Pascal, Samuel Hoffenstein, and Ellis St. Joseph wrote the screen play. Julien Duvivier directed it, and also co-produced it with Mr. Boyer.

Adult entertainment.

**"Thousands Cheer" with Kathryn Grayson,
Gene Kelly and an all-star cast**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 124 min.)

A lavish production, photographed in Technicolor, an appealing story, good comedy, romance, dancing, and delightful music—popular and classical—make "Thousands Cheer" extremely enjoyable. Add to these ingredients the presence of almost every MGM star and you have a production that is sure to be an outstanding box-office success. Kathryn Grayson, who sings several operatic arias, as well as lighter music, has a glorious voice. She has a charming personality and wins the spectator's sympathy. The story, which has an army camp background, is a boy-meets-girl affair, with Gene Kelly and Miss Grayson sharing romantic honors. Kelly, cast as a disgruntled soldier, is effective. A delightful surprise is Jose Iturbi, who, in addition to wielding a baton and playing several piano renditions that range from the classical to the "boogie-woogie," takes an active part in the story, handling his lines exceptionally well. A USO camp show furnishes the opportunity for the different stars to do their specialty routines. Acting as master of ceremonies, Mickey Rooney introduces Eleanor Powell, who does a fancy tap-dance routine; Red Skelton, who impersonates a shy customer in an hilarious drug store sequence; Lena Horne, who sings against a lavish mirrored background; Judy Garland, who sings a "jive" number accompanied on the piano by Iturbi; Frank Morgan, Lucille Ball, Ann Sothern and Marsha Hunt in a skit about the WAVES; Virginia O'Brien, who sings in her usual "dead-pan" style; and Don Loper and Maxine Barrat in a "Samba" dance number. Rooney, himself, does an imitation of Clark Gable and Lionel Barrymore. Added to all this are the orchestras of Kay Kyser, Bob Crosby, and Ben Carter:—

To effect a reconciliation between her parents (Col. John Boles and Mary Astor), Kathryn Grayson forsakes a concert career to live with her father at an army camp. Kathryn takes an active part in entertaining the soldiers, but her efforts to be friendly with Private Gene Kelly are unavailing; Kelly was rude to Kathryn because she represented authority. He eventually falls in love with her, however, and takes her to meet his family, aerial performers in a circus. Boles, alarmed at Kathryn's apparent infatuation for Kelly, wires her mother. Miss Astor arrives at camp determined to compel Kathryn to return to New York; army life had ruined her own marriage, and she did not want Kathryn to go through a similar experience. Kathryn begs to be allowed to stay for the big USO show she had planned for the following day. Meanwhile Kelly, learning of Miss Astor's intentions, leaves his post to protest to Boles. He is confined to the guardhouse for punishment. The following day, Kelly's family, who had a part in the show, induces Boles to permit Kelly to appear with the act. The show is a huge success, and Kathryn and her mother prepare to leave. At this moment Boles receives orders to take his men overseas. Boles' pending departure awakens Miss Astor's love. She effects a reconciliation with him, and gives her blessing to Kathryn and Kelly.

Paul Jarrico and Richard Collins wrote the screen play, Joseph Pasternak produced it, and George Sidney directed it. The cast includes Margaret O'Brien, Ben Blue, Frances Rafferty, Donna Reed, Marilyn Maxwell, Frank Jenks, Frank Sully, June Allyson, Gloria DeHaven and others.

Morally suitable for all.

UP TO DATE PRIORITY INFORMATION THAT WILL HELP YOU OBTAIN SUPPLIES

In reply to an inquiry from the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, relative to obtaining theatre supplies, Mr. A. G. Smith, Chief of the Amusements Section of the War Production Board, Washington, D. C., writes as follows:

"There are a considerable number of maintenance, repair and operating supplies which are used in motion picture theatres which can be purchased under CMP Regulation No. 5, through the extension of MRO—AA-5 ratings by certification.

"We are enclosing herewith a copy of CMP Regulation No. 5, by which you can determine what supplies can be obtained under the terms of the regulation. We wish to call your attention to some of the items used in motion picture theatres which cannot be purchased with a MRO—AA-5 rating. These items include incandescent light bulbs, freon refrigerants, copper wire or any repairs containing copper or copper base alloys and certain component parts for air conditioning equipment. Requests for priority ratings to purchase the restricted items should be filed on Form PD-1A, or other forms provided under specific limitation or conservation orders.

"Vacuum tubes should be purchased under the terms of limitation order L-265, a copy of which is enclosed.

"All repair parts for motion picture projectors, lamphouses, rectifiers, rewinders, film splicers, exciter lamps, incandescent projector lamps, pilot lamps, etc., can be purchased from a theatre supply dealer who has filed for a permissible stock on Form WPB-547 (formerly PD-IX). It is not necessary for the theatre owners to furnish the supply dealer with a priority rating, because the dealer has received a rating on the above mentioned form.

"There is no new equipment for installation available for new theatres, but we have been successful in building a limited stockpile of projectors, sound systems, lamphouses and rectifiers, which can be transferred to theatres where the equipment has been burned out or if the equipment is obsolete and repair parts are no longer available.

"It has been our endeavor to maintain a flow of the necessary mechanical repair and maintenance parts to the motion picture theatres, and we do not believe any exhibitor should experience difficulty in obtaining such supplies as he requires to continue in business.

"Should any of your members encounter difficulties in obtaining maintenance and repair parts, it will be appreciated if you will contact this office."

In a bulletin to his members, Pete J. Wood, secretary of the ITO of Ohio, comments on Mr. Smith's letter and outlines the forms, ratings, and regulations referred to therein. Wood's remarks follow:

"1. Note (Par. 5) that no priority rating is required for repair parts for motion picture projectors, lamphouses, rectifiers, rewinders, film splicers, excited lamps, incandescent projector lamps, pilot lamps, etc. For these items the supply dealer has filed the required form (WPB-547), and no other formality is required.

"2. Note (Par. 2) that certain maintenance, repair and operating supplies are now available to theatres under a MRO—AA-5 rating. This rating is extended automatically to theatres which execute, as a part of the order for supplies, the following certification:

"*'Preference rating MRO—AA-5*

"The undersigned certifies, subject to the criminal penalties for misrepresentation contained in section 35 (a) of the United States Criminal Code, that the items covered by this order are required for essential maintenance, repair or operating supplies; that this order is rated and placed in compliance with CMP regulation No. 5; and that the delivery requested will not result in a violation of the quantity restrictions contained in paragraph (f) of said regulation."

"The quantity restrictions which the theatre must not violate, do not apply 'to persons whose aggregate requirements of maintenance, repair and operating supplies do not exceed \$5000 per year.' (Par. (f) (5).) As to others, the restriction is that an order shall not call for delivery during 'any calendar quarter maintenance, repair or operating aggregate expenditures for (such) supplies during the calendar year 1942.'

"3. There is no affirmative list of supplies available under the list MRO—AA-5 rating. As stated by Smith (Par. 3) incandescent light bulbs, freon refrigerants, copper wire or any repairs containing copper or copper alloys and certain component parts for air conditioning equipment cannot be purchased with a MRO—AA-5 rating. Special requests on Form PD-1A (or other appropriate form) must be made for any such items. To evaluate MRO—AA-5 the exhibitor must consider all items other than (a) those for which no rating is required and (b) those specifically excepted from MRO—AA-5.

"4. Vacuum tubes are procurable only under Order L-265 which requires that the consumer (theatre) deliver to the supplier a used, defective or exhausted tube for the new one desired; or, that being impractical, that the consumer furnish the following:

"*'Consumer's Certificate*

"I hereby certify that the part(s) specified in this order are essential for presently needed repair of electronic equipment which I own or operate."

"5. Supply dealers and regional officers of the WPB doubtless can supply any additional information that may be needed in special cases. If any serious difficulty is encountered, either submit the problem to this office or take it up with Mr. Smith."

Keep this issue of HARRISON'S REPORTS as a handy reference, for the aforementioned will aid you in obtaining needed supplies in accordance with war-time regulations and with a minimum loss of time.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1943

No. 39

The Columbia Incident—Gone But Not Forgotten

On August 18, following the adoption by National Allied of the resolution relating to Columbia's failure to deliver to its 1942-43 contract-holders ten of the promised top potential box-office pictures, nine of which are now being offered on the 1943-44 contracts, Mr. Abram F. Myers, Allied's General Counsel, wrote to Mr. Harry Cohn, Columbia's president, transmitting a copy of the resolution.

Cohn forwarded this letter to Abe Montague, Columbia's general sales manager, who, on September 7, almost three weeks after Myers had written to Cohn, a lapse of time that allowed for careful consideration of the matter, wrote to Myers acknowledging his letter and stating that he "had carefully noted the contents." Immediately following this acknowledgement, and without in any way referring to the "noted contents," Montague ends his letter with the following: "I thought you might be interested in reading the attached letter which I have sent to Mr. Leo Wolcott, President of the Allied Theatre Owners of Iowa-Nebraska, Inc."

This letter to Wolcott, dated September 7, is a reply to a letter that Wolcott had sent to Montague informing him that his organization had endorsed the Allied resolution citing Columbia for its failure to carry out its promises. While Montague does not say so directly, it is apparent that his letter to Wolcott is meant to serve as a reply to Myers' letter to Cohn.

In the September 11 issue of this paper it was stated that our efforts to obtain a statement from any one of Columbia's responsible officials regarding their company's intentions in this matter were unavailing; none of these officials were either available or in a position to make any comment. Because of this we said that "ducking the issue" is in keeping with Columbia's business methods. Montague's letter to Wolcott bears that statement out, for it is as evasive a piece of writing as has ever been seen by this writer. The letter, which follows, is reproduced in full, both for your amusement and displeasure:

"Over a period of years Columbia Pictures has served exhibitors in this country and abroad conscientiously and at all time has tried to inject into their dealings a maximum degree of fairness and equity. This is particularly true in regard to the independent exhibitors of the United States because we who are an independent company have always felt a certain kinship to others who lacked affiliations which tend to make a total or composite setup.

"Your letter informing me that the Allied Theatres of Iowa-Nebraska have endorsed the resolutions of the Board of Directors of Allied States Association of

Motion Picture Exhibitors relating to Columbia has disappointed me. The violent form of the utterances are not justified even after the most casual view of the performance of this company in what is known as the 1942-43 season.

"There can be no question in the minds of exhibitors with whom we deal that the year just passed has been the best year of releases this company has had for many years. As a matter of fact, we have never since we are in business received as many favorable comments on our product and so few criticisms.

"This company has made many, many contributions to the art of picture making. It has made these pictures under the most trying conditions and has always struggled desperately to deliver worthwhile product. We are like any other company in any other form of business subject to business expediency; to the adjustment of our effort to meet conditions over which we have or have not control; in the struggle with producers, personalities, writers and directors to remain sufficiently elastic in our thinking so that we can do the best possible thing at the necessary time to suit our purposes; but at all times those purposes have envisioned fair dealing with our customers.

"Any individual in your organization, or any other organization, who has a just claim can present it and it will receive sincere and honest consideration.

"It is because of our knowledge that we have at all times acted in the interests of fair and just dealing that we are willing to face the consensus of opinion of the exhibitors of this country."

Mr. Myers has very properly and justifiably rejected Montague's response. In a letter dated September 10, Myers informs Montague that his letter to Wolcott "consists of generalizations highly laudatory of Columbia Pictures Corporation."

"I would be lacking in candor," continues Myers, "if I did not add that your communication fails utterly to meet the specific allegations of the Allied resolution. Your failure to offer any explanation in reference to the pictures cited by the Board is most disappointing. My disappointment is deepened by an item in *Boxoffice* (Nat. Ed.) for September 4, page 66, to the effect that 'Sahara' has been given its world premiere at Camp Campbell, Ky.; also by information that 'Cover Girl,' scheduled for early release in the 1943-44 season is now off the stage."

Whom does Montague think he is kidding? His statement to the contrary notwithstanding, the record shows that for years Columbia has been notoriously unfair, unjust, and unethical in its treatment of its

(Continued on last page)

**"Adventure in Iraq" with John Loder,
Paul Cavanaugh and Ruth Ford**
(Warner Bros., October 9; time, 64 min.)

For the avid followers of action pictures, who are not too exacting in their demands for logical stories, this program melodrama may prove to be a satisfying entertainment. Others, however, may find it tiresome; the story, which is based on the play, "The Green Goddess," is far-fetched and not particularly interesting. Moreover, its serial-like melodramatics tax one's credulity. There is nothing outstanding about it, either in production, acting, or story:—

Their plane forced down on the Syrian desert, because of a leaky gas line, Warren Douglas, an adventurous American flyer, John Loder, a dissipated-looking Englishman, and Ruth Ford, his unhappy wife, are unable to inform Cairo of their plight; the plane's radio tubes had burned out. Just before landing, the trio had seen a settlement about ten miles off across the desert. They set out on foot and come to the desert palace of Paul Cavanaugh, a Sheik who ruled a tribe of fanatical devil worshipers. Cavanaugh, addressing his visitors in cultured English accents, invites them to be his guests. Later that evening the trio hear a weird chanting outside the palace gates. Cavanaugh politely explains that three of his half-brothers, who had been serving as Nazi spies, had been arrested by the British, and were to be executed on the following morning. His tribesmen were demanding that they, his guests, be slain in revenge. Cavanaugh offers to spare Ruth if she will marry him after Douglas and Loder had been beheaded. Ruth spurns him. The two men quietly remove some of the tubes from a radio set in the palace and, taking Ruth with them, make a daring escape from their captors in the dead of night. They make their way to the plane, and succeed in broadcasting an appeal for help before they are attacked by Cavanaugh's pursuing tribesmen. Loder is killed during the attack, and Ruth and Douglas are taken back to a temple where religious rites to precede their slaughter were in progress. As Douglas is led away for execution, American bombers appear overhead. One bomber lands, and the commander secures the release of the captives by having one of the other planes intimidate the tribesmen with a few well-placed bombs.

George R. Bilson and Robert E. Kent wrote the screen play, and D. Ross Lederman directed it. Morally suitable for all.

**"A Scream in the Dark" with Robert Lowery
and Marie McDonald**
(Republic, October 15; time, 55 min.)

A program murder mystery melodrama of minor importance. First, the story is ridiculous to the point of annoyance; secondly, the performances are weak. It is a muddled attempt to combine comedy with melodrama, with the comedy falling flat, and the melodramatic angle far from exciting. The action is for the most part so far-fetched that the spectator loses patience with the whole thing. As a matter of fact the proceedings become so involved that at times it is difficult to follow the action. No sympathy can be felt for the different characters, because of the silly situations in which they are placed:—

Robert Lowery, a reporter, and Edward Brophy, a news-photographer, establish a private detective agency at the suggestion of Marie McDonald, Lowery's fiancée. Their first client is Hobart Cavanaugh, a timid, middle-aged man, who seeks his wife (Elizabeth Russell). Cavanaugh explains that she had re-

cently inherited the estate of a wealthy brother, and that he suspected her of running away with William Haade, a fortune-hunter. Lowery succeeds in locating the missing couple, and in snapping their photo. Elizabeth agrees to divorce Cavanaugh, and the story and photo appear in the evening papers. That evening Arthur Loft meets Lowery and declares that Elizabeth is his wife. He retains Lowery to find her again. Late that night Loft is mysteriously murdered. Through a jilted girl-friend of Haade's Lowery learns where Haade and Elizabeth were hiding. Arriving at their residence, Lowery is slugged by a mysterious stranger, who then murders Haade. The following day, Lowery is visited by Frank Fenton, who, too, claims that Elizabeth is his wife. Learning that Fenton is a notorious crook, who once had dealings with Haade, Lowery rushes to Cavanaugh's home, believing that harm might come to him. Meanwhile Marie, with the aid of Police Lieutenant Jack LaRue, discovers that a headless woman in the city morgue had been killed with the same weapon that had been used to murder Haade and Loft. LaRue positively identifies the headless woman as Cavanaugh's wife, and deduces that Cavanaugh, after killing her, had hired Elizabeth to pose as his wife so that she could inherit the fortune and turn it over to him. Marie and LaRue rush to Cavanaugh's home to warn Lowery, but when they arrive they find that Cavanaugh had accidentally killed himself when he tried to attack Lowery. Elizabeth and Fenton, who were with Cavanaugh, had been shot during the battle.

Gerald Schnitzer and Anthony Coldeway wrote the screen play, and George Sherman produced and directed it.

Not for children.

**"Princess O'Rourke" with
Olivia de Havilland, Robert Cummings
and Charles Coburn**

(Warner Bros., October 23; time, 94 min.)

A delightful romantic comedy. It is a good mass entertainment, with a particular appeal to women because of the romantic involvements. The story, which revolves around the romance between a royal princess and a young American airline pilot, who thinks that she is a penniless refugee, is appealing, amusing, and interesting. Although the theme is not novel, it has been handled most skillfully by Norman Krasna, who wrote the screen play and directed it. Bright dialogue and amusing situations are prevalent throughout, keeping the audience laughing from start to finish. In the last two reels the scene shifts to the White House where Presidential intervention solves the romantic difficulties of the young lovers. These final sequences, though amusing, have been handled in good taste. The performers are very capable:—

Realizing that Olivia de Havilland, a refugee Princess, was bored with the quiet life she led in New York, Charles Coburn, her guardian uncle, decides to send her to California for a vacation. Olivia, traveling incognito, boards a plane and takes an overdose of sleeping pills. Fog turns the plane back to New York, and Robert Cummings and Jack Carson, copilots, cannot rouse her. Unable to establish her identity, Cummings takes her to his apartment and, aided by Jane Wyman, Carson's wife, puts her to bed. On the following morning Olivia awakens and finds a note from Cummings asking her for a date that evening. Olivia returns to her hotel and, after explaining her absence to Coburn, leaves to keep the date

with Cummings, unaware that she was followed by a Secret Service agent. Olivia and Cummings spend the evening with Carson and Jane. Intrigued by their simplicity and sincerity, Olivia leads them to believe that she was a penniless refugee on her way to California to accept a position as a house-maid. Cummings, infatuated, asks her to marry him. Because her family traditions called for alliances with royal blood, Olivia cannot accept his offer. Meanwhile Coburn, having assembled information on Cummings, learns that he is industrious and of excellent character. He informs Olivia that he knows of her love for Cummings, and that her father, the King, had consented to the marriage. Cummings' astonishment at learning that Olivia is a Princess is heightened by an invitation to a White House reception. At the White House, Cummings rebels when Coburn informs him that he will have to give up his American citizenship as a condition of marriage. He flatly refuses, and cancels the marriage. But with Presidential aid, and while Coburn is sound asleep, Olivia renounces her royal standing and marries Cummings in a midnight ceremony, with a sleepy Supreme Court Justice officiating.

Hal B. Wallis is the producer. The cast includes Harry Davenport, Gladys Cooper, Minor Watson and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Sweet Rosie O'Grady" with Betty Grable and Robert Young

(20th Century-Fox, rel. date not set; time, 76 min.)

As in "Coney Island," Betty Grable's previous picture, this, too, has as its period the gay years before the turn of the century, and Miss Grable again enacts the role of a reigning musical comedy actress of that day; it will in all probability duplicate the success of the other, for the action is peppy and the music is tuneful. The story and the treatment are, however, routine; as a matter of fact the picture follows the formula set by Twentieth Century-Fox for its musical comedies. The basis for the comedy is the quarreling between Miss Grable and Robert Young, a *Police Gazette* reporter, because of his articles exposing her burlesque background. Their romantic clashes are laugh-provoking. Reginald Gardiner, as an English Duke enamoured of Miss Grable, and Adolphe Menjou, as Young's editor, add much to the comedy. The picture has been photographed in Technicolor, and the production values are more than adequate:—

Soon after announcing her engagement to Reginald Gardiner, an English Duke, Betty Grable, a European musical comedy star, leaves for New York to make her American debut. On board ship, Alan Dinehart, her manager, brings her a batch of the latest *Police Gazette*s featuring a series of sensational stories written by Robert Young exposing Betty as an erstwhile Brooklyn burlesque Queen. Furious Betty determines to deal with Young. Upon her arrival in New York she declares to the press that Young's expose of her past was a publicity stunt, and that the two of them were to be married as soon as she settled half her fortune on him. Young, scooped by rival reporters on the story of his impending "marriage," is fired by Adolphe Menjou, his editor. Realizing that Betty had gained the upper hand on him, Young humbly apologizes to her in the hope that she would retract her statement. Betty, however, gloats over him. Young sells Menjou the idea of capitalizing on the feud by permitting him to write a lurid, fictional story of his

"romance" with Betty. His sensational stories bring Betty to her senses, and she agrees to an armistice. Both fall in love. But their truce is shortlived; Young, to eliminate Gardiner as a rival, informs him that there is some truth to the stories he had written. Betty boots them both out of her apartment. Young resumes his writings, and Betty, in retaliation, puts on a hit burlesque show, in which Young is made the butt of the jokes. It all ends happily when Young, learning that Menjou had stolen a packet of love letters that Betty had once written to Gardiner, prevents their publication. Betty, appreciative, declares her love for him.

Ken Englund wrote the screen play, William Perlberg produced it, and Irving Cummings directed it. The cast includes Sig Ruman, Virginia Grey, Phil Regan and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Thirteenth Guest" with Dick Purcell and Helen Parrish

(Monogram, November 5; time, 61 min.)

A mildly entertaining program mystery melodrama. The story starts off in an interesting manner, but it soon peters out because of the weakness of the plot construction, and of the injection of silly and unnecessary comedy, caused by the stupid antics of dumb detectives. Even though the identity of the murderer is concealed until the end, one is not held in suspense, for one guesses easily who he is. The melodramatics are rather old-fashioned. The film may get by with the indiscriminating, but those who demand some semblance of a plot will be disappointed, for it is highly exaggerated and illogical.

On her twenty-first birthday, Helen Parrish visits the old unused home of her late grandfather to open and read his will. Thirteen years previously, Helen's grandfather had called his family together and had informed them that Helen was to inherit his estate, but that she must not read his will until she reached her twenty-first birthday. As Helen, alone, starts to open up the envelope containing the will, she is assaulted by a mysterious intruder. Later, Paul McVey, Helen's uncle and oldest member of the family, employs Dick Purcell, a private investigator, to protect Helen and himself from harm; he felt that an unknown person would make an attempt on their lives. Purcell visits the old house where a girl with the exact features of Helen is found murdered. During Purcell's investigation, Helen enters the house and reveals that she had eluded her attacker, and that the dead girl had been an imposter, whose motives were unknown. The police, headed by Purcell, investigate. In the course of events, three members of Helen's family are murdered. Helen receives a telephone call, ostensibly from Purcell, asking her to meet him at the old house. Purcell learns of this call and follows her. He arrives in time to save her from death at the hands of McVey, who sought to prevent Helen's inheriting her grandfather's estate. Purcell proves that McVey had killed the others; in the event of Helen's death, the money would have been equally divided among the remaining members of the family. Purcell proves also that the dead girl, who had impersonated Helen, had been in league with McVey, but that he himself had mistaken her for Helen.

Charles Marion and Tim Ryan wrote the screen play, Linsley Parsons produced it, and William Beau-dine directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

customers. The mere fact that he chose to answer a serious charge against his company by a series of equivocal remarks proves not only that Columbia has acted entirely without fairness, but also that it does not give a "hoot."

"Sahara," one of the ten undelivered top pictures promised to the 1942-43 contract-holders, gives undeniable proof of Columbia's base business tactics, and it refutes Montague's remark about his company at all times trying to inject a "maximum degree of fairness and equity" in its dealings with its customers. This picture, which has been completed for many months, is hailed by Columbia as one of its biggest productions, destined to become one of the new season's top money-makers. That the picture is far above the usual Columbia quality is evidenced by the fact that it is being specially trade-shown throughout the country—something that Columbia reserves for only its very best pictures.

By withholding this choice picture from the 1942-43 high-allocation group, where it rightfully belongs, and by putting in its place a "B" picture of inferior quality, Columbia "hooks" the exhibitor both ways, coming and going, for not only does the exhibitor lose a choice picture, but he is compelled to exhibit at a high-allocation price a picture that will gross less money than the choice picture that he had been promised. Then, if the exhibitor still wants the choice picture, he may try to buy it again in the 1943-44 season. In other words, you pay a high price for a Cadillac car, but what you actually get is a Ford or some other inexpensive car; then, when you sell the Ford, you may add enough money to the amount you received for it and try to buy the Cadillac once again—and you must not be surprised if you get a Ford even the second time.

"Sahara," of course, is only one of the ten undelivered pictures. Had all the others been produced, they would certainly have increased the box-office returns of the 1942-43 contract-holders, thus giving them results commensurate with what they had paid for pictures allocated to the higher rental brackets. Particular mention is made of "Sahara" because it is the only one of the undelivered pictures that is now "in the can." Why, if not for the specific purpose of mulcting its customers, for whom it professes a "certain kinship," has Columbia failed to deliver it? How does Columbia figure that withholding this picture is a matter of business expediency, the sort that evasions fair dealing with its customers? Ask these questions of the Columbia salesman. He should be happy to explain in which way his company has your interests at heart.

Montague's letter requires no comment to prove its utter evasiveness; it proclaims more effectively than anything this paper might say, its own impotency. It contains, however, one significant statement, namely, that "any individual in your organization, or any other organization, who has a just claim can present it and it will receive sincere and honest consideration." The fact that Montague has chosen, in his responses to both Myers and Wolcott, to ignore the issue completely, denotes that he does not consider the charge that his company is flagrantly disregarding the moral rights of its 1942-43 contract-holders as a just claim, worthy of "sincere and honest consideration."

Two weeks ago this paper said that Columbia stands condemned by its silence in this matter. We

say now that it stands doubly condemned for having spoken up and said nothing.

Since Montague has seen fit to ignore the specific charges against his company, and since he states that the company "is willing to face the consensus of opinion of the exhibitors of this country," it would appear that, insofar as Columbia is concerned, the issue is closed.

When the security of this country was threatened by the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor, our people were faced with an enemy that was numerically superior in war weapons and fighting men. Out of the destruction and chaos caused by this attack there arose that now historic cry "Remember Pearl Harbor." Our people did not waver. The significance of that phrase burned deeply in the heart of every true American, and it was a prime factor in the uniting of our nation for the gigantic task of building our huge war machine, which will eventually bring our attackers to their knees.

Columbia, fortified by a contract that permits it to renege from its announcement program, has committed a "sneak attack" on you, its customers. So long as you sign contracts that give them this right to renege, your security will at all times be threatened. And you will have no one to blame but yourself.

It is up to each and every one of you, then, to make your opinion known to Columbia, so that the consensus of opinion, which it is "willing to face," will prove so intensely adverse and so overwhelming in scope that it will require no further argument to bring it to a policy of fair dealing with its customers.

This is no time for you to shrug your shoulders and assume a "what's-the-use-they-are-protected-legally" attitude. Rise up and let your battle cry be "Remember Columbia's Promises in 1942-43!" And make the full significance of that cry be felt deeply by Columbia, through its most vulnerable channel—the salesman—when he comes around and glibly promises you the moon and the stars in order to get your signature on the 1943-44 contract. Remind him that his company's promises are worthless unless they are written in the contract.

Remember Columbia's promises in 1942-43 when the salesman starts making his promises for 1943-44!

MAKE A NOTE OF THIS INFORMATION

Those of you who wish to make inquiries relative to obtaining priorities or other information for theatre operating supplies and repair parts should make a note of the following changes in the titles and personnel in the Service Equipment Division of the War Production Board.

Mr. A. G. Smith, whose title was formerly Chief of the Amusements Section of the Service Equipment Division, is now known as Chief of the Theatre Equipment Section of the Service Equipment Division of the W.P.B. All inquiries pertaining to the manufacture of 35 mm. motion picture projection equipment, sound systems, accessories, and repair parts should be sent to him. His address is Room 325, Standard Oil Bldg., Third and Constitution Avenues, Washington, D. C.

If you wish to make inquiry about the repair, construction, or reconstruction of your theatre, you should address your letter to Mr. George MacMurphy, Chief of the Amusements Section, Office of Civilian Requirements, Room 2408, Social Security Bldg., Washington, D. C.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1943

No. 40

JUMPING AT CONCLUSIONS

Because of a recent statement by National Allied that it intends to cooperate more closely with the Catholic Legion of Decency, in order to "avoid as far as possible the playing of objectionable pictures," certain trade papers have implied that there is more to the announcement than appears on the surface.

At their meeting in Baltimore on August 10, 11, and 12, Allied's Board of Directors was informed that Monsignor John J. McClafferty, executive secretary of the Legion of Decency, felt that some of the Allied units had not cooperated with his organization. The Board then decided to take steps for closer cooperation.

Following this decision, Abram F. Myers, Allied's General Counsel and Chairman of the Board, wrote the following letter to Monsignor McClafferty:

"I hope you will see fit to wire me immediately of any picture that has been given a 'C' (lowest) rating so that I can, in turn, notify the regional associations. In this way, we may be able to get the information to the regional members before they make a commitment to the picture.

"On my next trip to New York, I would appreciate the opportunity of calling on you to the end that we may arrive at a thorough understanding of each other's problems and thus pave the way for cooperation in all matters of common interest."

One of the trade papers, *Boxoffice*, jumped at conclusions concerning Allied's move for closer cooperation with the Legion. In its September 18 issue, in an article titled, "Catholic Legion of Decency Poised for New Film Attack," and sub-titled, "Allied's Cooperative Move One Angle; Support for Neely Bill Suggested," the suggestion is made that the affiliation is for purely political purposes.

Among the conclusions drawn by *Boxoffice* is that the tie-up indicates a "horse-trade" between Allied and the Legion, in that Allied "could bring pressure to bear on the distributors for cancellation of any picture the Legion condemned, for which Allied might in turn support the Legion's morals campaign"; also, that "Allied is championing the Neely anti-block booking bill, revived before Congress recessed for the summer," and that "support of this bill by the Catholic Legion might have considerable influence in Congress."

Boxoffice seems to be in error in its reference to the Neely bill, for, according to the information this office has on hand, the old Neely bill that was introduced by Senator Kilgore before Congress recessed this sum-

mer was the Neely Theatre Divorcement Bill and not the anti-block booking bill. This error, however, is not important; the important thing is the groundless and unwarranted inference that has been drawn.

Boxoffice adds that "responsible industry executives fear that the chief result of the new Allied-Legion affiliation might be an increase in the influence of the latter concerning the content of motion pictures, and a projection of that influence into trade problems and operations."

In view of these far-reaching conclusions, HARRISON'S REPORTS called upon Mr. Myers to learn what, if anything, was behind Allied's move for cooperation with the Legion. Here is what Mr. Myers had to say in a letter he wrote to us on September 22:

"Thank you for calling my attention to certain purely speculative stories concerning Allied and the Legion of Decency.

"There is no justification for implying that anything more is involved than a courteous proffer by Allied of cooperation in respect of any pictures that may be condemned by the Legion.

"It seemed to our board of directors that Allied could be of assistance if promptly notified of all 'C' ratings and that it might at the same time save its members from making embarrassing commitments.

"Any implication of trafficking between the two bodies is as unworthy as it is unwarranted."

If, by its article, *Boxoffice* seeks to discredit Allied, it has failed miserably; it will have to make deductions from something more substantial than flimsy inferences before it can succeed in that purpose.

Just to show you how wrong and how baseless these conclusions are, let us take up the conclusion that Allied, in exchange for its support to the Legion's crusade, would in turn receive the Legion's support for the passage of the Neely anti-block booking bill. The record shows that in 1936, during the hearing of this Bill before a Congressional sub-committee, Father Daly, who was then Executive Secretary of the Legion of Decency, told the committee that his organization was opposed to the passage of that bill on the ground that it was a censorship measure. According to Father Daly, the Legion felt that public opinion and not legislative measures would guarantee a wholesome screen. How, then, on the face of what the record shows, can it be concluded that the Legion would do an about-face and support this measure?

Allied has neither suggested nor proposed that the Legion become the guardian of motion picture morals; also, it has neither suggested nor proposed that the

"Corvette K-225" with Randolph Scott and Ella Raines

(Universal, October 1; time, 98 min.)

From a production point of view, this war melodrama extolling the corvettes of the Royal Canadian Navy is a well-made picture. Its reception, however, will depend on whether or not your patrons are tired of war pictures. For "Corvette K-225," though well-made, offers little that has not been seen many times in recent war films. There are many spectacular sea-battle scenes. As a matter of fact, some of these scenes are authentic, having been filmed at sea aboard corvettes undergoing actual attack. The story, however, is simple, and its treatment is routine. Moreover, it lags considerably in spots. But despite these failings, the film is a fine tribute to a hitherto little publicized but most important cog of the United Nations' vast war machine. The dangers these little warships and their crews encounter, while protecting convoys against submarine and aerial attacks, are stirringly depicted. The performances are good. Some romance is hinted at, but it is of no importance:—

Rescued after a submarine had blown up their corvette, Lieut. Commander Randolph Scott and five other survivors of the corvette's crew of sixty-five men return to Canada aboard a destroyer. Scott requests and is given command of the K-225, a new corvette, which had yet to come off the shipways. When he visits Ella Raines to inform her of her brother's death on the ill-fated corvette, Ella, grief-stricken, accuses him of being responsible. Later, however, she apologizes. A romance develops between the two in the brief days before he goes to sea. James Brown, Ella's brother and a Navy subaltern, is assigned to Scott's ship. For its maiden voyage, the K-225 is assigned to help guard a convoy bound for England. En route, the ship and its gallant crew bravely fight gales and enemy attacks all the way. Answering the SOS of a stricken ship, the K-225 picks up the sound of the attacking submarine's motors. Scott forces the U-boat to the surface with depth charges and, in an exchange of shell-fire, sends it to the bottom. Seriously damaged in the battle, and with Scott and most of the crew members injured badly, the battered K-225 rejoins the convoy. Nearing Ireland, a Nazi sub strikes again. With only a few men able to man the guns and depth charges, Brown assumes command and successfully beats off the attack. Barely able to stay afloat, the K-225 limps into a British port with its charges. Scott requests that it be repaired immediately, in order that little time be lost for the return voyage.

Lieut. John Rhodes Sturdy, R.C.N.V.R., wrote the screen play, Howard Hawks produced it, and Richard Rosson directed it. The cast includes, Barry Fitzgerald, Andy Devine, Fuzzy Knight, Murray Alper, Noah Beery, Jr., Milburn Stone, Thomas Gomez, Matt Willis and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Whistling in Brooklyn" with Red Skelton, Ann Rutherford and Jean Rogers

(MGM, no release date set; time, 88 min.)

Good program fare. With "Whistling in Brooklyn," Red Skelton continues the series of comedies in which he, as the "Fox," a radio detective, becomes innocently involved in real gangland activities. There is nothing novel about the story, but, bolstered by Skelton's brand of comedy, it arouses hearty laughter in ancient slapstick situations that would ordinarily

seem ridiculous. An hilarious sequence is where Skelton, in an effort to prevent the murder of a police official attending a baseball game, disguises himself as a bearded member of a ball team playing against the Brooklyn Dodgers, who enact themselves. "Rags" Raglund and Sam Levene add much to the comedy. The film is fast-moving throughout:—

Baffled by a series of murders committed by a mysterious person known as "Constant Reader," the police act quickly when "Rags" Raglund informs them that Red Skelton, his employer and famous radio criminologist, is the man they seek. When the police arrive at the broadcasting station to arrest him, Skelton, believing they are practical jokers trying to interfere with his plans to marry Ann Rutherford, eludes them. Skelton is only too willing to give himself up when he learns that Raglund had identified him as the murderer for publicity purposes. To avoid being shot on sight, Skelton hides in an old warehouse and notifies the police where he can be found. While waiting for their arrival, Skelton is set upon by a group of gangsters who try to kill him. The gangsters scatter when the police arrive, and Skelton, aware that something sinister is afoot, determines to track down his attackers. Disguised, he sneaks into police headquarters and reads the file on "Constant Reader." Information there leads him to believe that Ray Collins, a respected politician, might be the next victim. Skelton rushes to Collins' home to warn him, only to learn that the politician was actually head of a criminal gang trying to seize political power. He learns also that the next victim on Collins' list was the Police Commissioner, who was to be stabbed during a pre-arranged brawl at a baseball game. By a ruse, Skelton eludes his captors and manages to reach the ball park. There he disguises himself as one of the bearded ball players. During the game, Skelton tries to warn the commissioner, who was seated in a box with Collins, but to no avail. When Collins' men start a riot to camouflage the commissioner's murder, Skelton leaps into the box and grapples with Collins. Skelton's beard is torn off his face and, recognized, he is chased by both the police and Collins' henchmen. Skelton leads them on a merry chase to Collins' home, where he succeeds in proving the politician's guilt.

Nat Perrin wrote the screen play, George Haight produced it, and S. Sylvan Simon directed it. The cast includes Henry O'Neill, William Frawley, Steve Geray, Robert Emmet O'Connor and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Campus Rhythm" with Gale Storm and Robert Lowery

(Monogram, November 19; time, 61 min.)

This is one of those harmless little pictures, with enough comedy and music to satisfy as a supporting feature in small-town and neighborhood theatres. Although the story is familiar, and the outcome is obvious, it manages to hold one's attention because of the engaging performances. Gale Storm sings a few tuneful songs, as does "Gee-Gee" Pierson, a singing comedienne, who shows promise. "Candy" Candido, who has a remarkable facility for raising his voice from a deep bass to a high soprano pitch, adds to the comedy with his voice inflections. The action is slow, but it is not boring:—

Gale Storm, a radio singer, becomes highly indignant when she learns that her uncle, to get himself out of debt to a talent agent, had signed a contract

for her to sing on a national radio program. To avoid fulfilling the contract, and to satisfy her ambition for higher learning, Gale adopts the name and credentials of another girl and enrolls in a mid-west college. Robert Lowery, leader of the school's orchestra, is fascinated by her beauty, but Gale falls in love with Johnny Downs, managing editor of the college paper. Meanwhile, Gale's sponsors institute a search for her. Unsuccessful in their efforts to locate her, the sponsors hit upon the idea of running a nationwide contest for college orchestras, the winner to receive a long-term contract. The band spends many hours rehearsing their songs, and Gale, without revealing her identity, teaches "Gee-Gee" Pierson, the band's girl-singer, the art of singing before a microphone. On the night of the broadcast, "Gee-Gee" falls ill. Lowery prevails on Gale to substitute for her. As a result of Gale's singing, the band wins the contest. Meanwhile Gale's voice had been recognized by her uncle, who arrives at the school with reporters and reveals her identity. Gale's classmates and Johnny believe that she had deceived them for publicity purposes. She overcomes their resentment when she satisfactorily explains her predicament.

Charles R. Marion and Albert Beich wrote the screen play, Lindsley Parsons produced it, and Arthur Dreifuss directed it. The cast includes Doug Leavitt, Herbert Hayes, Tom Kennedy, Marie Blake, Claudia Drake and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Sahara" with Humphrey Bogart

(Columbia, October 14; time, 95 min.)

"Sahara" is one of the better current war melodramas. Although the exciting action occasionally reverts to typical Hollywood heroics, the film, on the whole, strikes a realistic note and offers considerable suspense. The popularity of Humphrey Bogart, who heads the all-male cast, coupled with his and the supporting cast's good performances, should put the picture over with most audiences. All the action takes place on the Libyan desert during the period when the British were being pushed back to the El Alamein line, and it revolves around the courageous efforts of a tank crew to make contact with its unit, after having been cut off by the swift Nazi advance. Most of the excitement occurs in the final reels where Bogart and his men make a victorious stand against overwhelming forces in a battle for a desert water hole. While it is a stirring entertainment, its neither cheerful nor pretty. For this reason, the film may direct more of an appeal to men than to women. Another drawback, as far as women are concerned, is the lack of a romantic angle. The inclusion of romance, however, would have been out of place:—

Cut off from his unit after the fall of Tobruk, Sergeant Humphrey Bogart, Commander of the tank "Lulubelle," determines that it shall not fall into the hands of the enemy. Together with Bruce Bennett and Dan Duryea, the surviving members of his crew, Bogart heads the tank in the direction of El Alamein. En route, they meet and pick up a group of Allied stragglers—three Tommies; a South African; a British medical officer; and a Free Frenchman. All board the tank. Later, Rex Ingram, a Sudanese Corporal, and J. Carroll Naish, his Italian prisoner, join the group. Guided by Ingram, Bogart heads for a desert water hole where he finds no more than a fast diminishing trickle of water, sufficient enough to sustain the group.

They remain at the water hole for two days until the trickle stops. As they prepare to leave, a Nazi scout car arrives and is captured. Bogart learns from his prisoners that a Nazi motorized column was headed for the water hole. He decides to make a stand against them, in the hope that it will slow up the German advance. Giving Bennett the scout car, Bogart sends him south to the British for aid. Despite their furious attacks, Bogart's men successfully hold the Nazis at bay. Desperately in need of water for his men, and unaware that Bogart, too, was in the same predicament, the Nazi commandant seeks a truce. Bogart slyly demands that he surrender, but the commandant flatly refuses. After days of intolerable suffering, and with no more than a British soldier and himself left to defend their position, Bogart resigns himself to an inevitable fate. Just then a Nazi shell strikes the water hole and the explosion causes the water to gush. The Nazi soldiers, in a frenzy of thirst, throw down their arms and willingly surrender to Bogart. Leading his prisoners in front of "Lulubelle," Bogart meets up with a British column, headed by Bennett, coming to his aid.

John H. Lawson and Zoltan Korda wrote the screen play. Mr. Korda also directed it. The cast includes Lloyd Bridges, Richard Nugent, Louis T. Mercier, Hans Schumm and others.

Morally suitable for all.

MORE ABOUT THE COLUMBIA INCIDENT

In an open letter to the stockholders of Columbia Pictures, dated September 23, Pete J. Wood, secretary of the Independent Theatre Owners of Ohio, has this to say:

"You recently received from the above company a series of beautiful technicolor pictures purporting to describe some of the feature pictures which will be released by the company during the next few months.

"Surely the receipt of these works of art must have given you extreme satisfaction as they came to you in addition to a fifty cent dividend on your stock, whereas last year and the preceding year and still another year, you didn't even receive a set of the pretty pictures on your Columbia investment.

"I dare say you felt pretty proud as you looked over this picture file—but, dear stockholder, all is not gold that glitters—and, if your company pursues its well established policy of making promises via what is known in the industry as the 'pretty-picture book' method, you are going to find yourself, like many, many hundreds of theater owners, disappointed when the 1943-44 season comes to a close.

"In order to acquaint you with the exact situation, you will find attached a copy of a resolution adopted by the Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors at its Board of Directors meeting held in Baltimore on August 12th, 1943. This organization is comprised of theater owners scattered throughout the country, and the resolution, you will find, also represents the attitude of many, many other theater owners.

"You are a shareholder in a great industry, but unfortunately the ethics of some of its \$145,000 per year executives have not kept pace with its marvelous growth."

(Editor's Note: The Allied resolution referred to by Wood was reproduced in the August 21 issue of this paper.)

Legion's "C" rating be accepted as a classification by which the unsuitability of a picture should be determined. Allied has, to our way of thinking, wisely recognized that the Legion wields influential power in many communities. Hence, by furnishing to its members immediately a list of those pictures given "C" ratings, many of them might be saved from making embarrassing commitments.

Those who oppose the policies of Allied should try to base their attacks on facts; only then might they succeed in casting reflection on it. Jumping at conclusions, based on suppositions, is an expediency that tends to discredit not the party against whom the conclusions are drawn, but the party who does the "jumping."

A THEORY EXPLODES

Frequently certain new items are so self-explanatory that their full effect is evident without any editorial comment whatsoever:

From *Weekly Variety*, September 22:

"Samuel Goldwyn and RKO are in a financial clinch about the relative values of 'North Star' and 'Gone With the Wind,' the latter of which was road-showed on a 70% basis and made plenty of coin. Goldwyn insists on the same percentage, on the theory that he has spent \$3,000,000 on 'North Star' and that its boxoffice returns will be sufficient to raise it into the super-duper class.

"RKO officials are arguing that 'North Star' is a Russian subject with a political angle which might not meet the general approval of American film fans, particularly in the midwest sector, which is a long way from Moscow in miles and political theories."

From *Daily Variety*, September 23:

"Sam Goldwyn sneak-previewed his \$3,000,000 epic, 'North Star,' the other night in an outlying theatre, with reports that the film is another war picture, with horror and other elements that might have been a sensation six months ago. Report is that there is no outstanding performance in the picture, it lacks satisfying romance, also comedy relief. Picture also was over-long. Following the preview, which had nine walkouts, with other patrons taking brief intermissions, RKO executives prevailed on Goldwyn to soften up the picture and take out the rough spots, as well as cut down the running time, which is being done."

A GOOD SUGGESTION

Robert E. Welsh, editor and publisher of *Box Office Digest*, has this to say, in part, regarding new screen personalities:

"It is well to consider the overwhelming importance of the personality angle in our success, now that we are in a war period when the demands of a nation in battle are restricting the supply of new faces and new talents.

"The producers are searching hard, they are gambling huge sums, to bring new personality assets to the industry's ledgers—and that means to the ledgers of exhibitors as well as their own.

"Exhibitors, and particularly the chain organizations with their vast opportunities for mass selling, can contribute greatly to the continued vigor of the

business by slanting publicity and display copy consciously towards encouragement of new names and faces.

"It is a case where they should bend a little backward from the line of least resistance and past experience.

"Talented newcomers, especially from the ranks of youth, will pay off for all the industry, not alone for themselves, in return for any pressure given them now to establish names and identities.

"Give authority to the men who handle the advertising and publicity for the theatres to put that little extra space to the names of the newcomers who will pay off tomorrow."

Mr. Welsh has spoken wisely. You should do all you can to help in the establishment of new stars.

The war has made serious inroads in the ranks of Hollywood's leading players, particularly the males, and the continual depletion of stars is making the casting of pictures more and more difficult. To offset this loss of star value, most of the producers are replenishing their talent rosters with newcomers, many of whom have been given important assignments in forthcoming productions. Warner Brothers, for example, since the first of the year, has signed seven new leading men, and all of them have been put to work in current productions. Moreover, it has established in the east a coaching school for the development of new talent. The other major companies, too, have made important contributions in discovering and developing new screen personalities.

As more and more actors become unavailable for picture making, the power to attract patrons becomes correspondingly weaker, thus threatening seriously the revenue of the theatres. To offset this deplorable condition, the producers are investing much money and effort in building up new players. You should give them your full support, by exploiting as much as possible the names of these new players.

By helping to create a "following" for a newcomer, the exhibitor not only helps the player and the producer, but also adds immeasurably to the potentiality of his own box-office returns.

ISN'T IT THE TRUTH

In Hollywood the cannons roar,
And swooping airplanes dip and soar,
There lurks a spy behind each door,
In Hollywood.

Explosions rock synthetic skies,
Great navies topple and capsize,
Whole armies promptly meet demise,
In Hollywood.

Each hero's words are brave and terse,
Foes breathe a Jap or Nazi curse,
Each gal gets threats of death (or worse)
In Hollywood.

From guns and tanks we beg surcease,
We go to movies for RELEASE,
Call off the war—we sue for peace—
In Hollywood!

—AMY GREIF, in *The Sun*,
of Baltimore, Md.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXV

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RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

1942-43

4023 Passport to Suez—Warren William	Aug. 19
4010 My Kingdom for a Cook—Coburn-Chapman	Aug. 31
4003 Destroyer—Robinson-Ford	Sept. 2
4016 Dangerous Blondes—Joslyn-Keyes	Sept. 23
4020 Footlight Glamour—Singleton-Lake	Sept. 30

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

Hail to the Rangers—Starrett	Sept. 16
Doughboys in Ireland—Baker-O'Donnell	Oct. 7
Sahara—Bogart-Bennett-Naish	Oct. 14
The Chance of a Lifetime—Morris-Stone	Oct. 26
Is Everybody Happy?—Ted Lewis	Oct. 28

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

(Block 1—release dates are tentative)

401 Salute to the Marines—Beery	September
402 Above Suspicion—Crawford-Montgomery	September
403 I Dood It—Skelton-Powell	September
404 Swing Shift Masie—Sothorn-Craig	October
405 Best Foot Forward—Ball-Gaxton	October
406 Adventures of Tartu—Donat	October
407 Dr. Gillespie's Criminal Case—Barrymore	November

- 408 Young Ideas—Astor-Marshall November
 409 Girl Crazy—Garland-Rooney November
 410 Lassie Come Home—McDowall-Crisp December
 411 The Man from Down Under—Laughton... December
 412 Whistling in Brooklyn—Skelton-Rutherford December

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 257 Law Rides Again—Maynard-Gibson (57 m.)... Aug. 6
 267 Black Market Rustlers—Range Busters (59m)... Aug. 27
 254 Six Gun Gospel—J. M. Brown (55 m.)... Sept. 3
 222 Here Comes Kelly—Quillan-Woodbury... Sept. 10
 215 Revenge of the Zombies—Carradine-Borg... Sept. 17
 255 Outlaws of Stampede Pass—J. M. Brown (55 min.) Oct. 15
 268 Bullets & Saddles—Range Busters (54 m.)... Oct. 29
 211 Mystery of the 13th Guest—Purcell-Parrish... Nov. 5
 226 Nearly Eighteen—Storm-Henry Nov. 12
 210 Campus Rhythm—Storm-Lowery Nov. 19

(End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- 308 Melody Parade—Quillan-Hughes (re.) Aug. 27
 307 Spotlight Scandals—Fay-Gilbert Sept. 24
 309 The Unknown Guest—Jory-Blake Oct. 22
 351 Texas Kid—J. M. Brown (57 m.) Nov. 26
 361 Death Valley Rangers—Trail Blazers (56 m.)... Dec. 3

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 4229 Submarine Alert—Arlen-Barrie Sept. 17
 4254 Union Pacific—McCrea-Stanwyck (reissue)... not set
 4255 Souls at Sea—Cooper-Raft (reissue)..... not set

(End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

Block 1

- 4301 Let's Face It—Hope-Hutton not set
 4302 The Good Fellows—Kellaway-Walker not set
 4303 True to Life—Martin-Powell-Moore not set
 4304 Tornado—Morris-Kelly not set
 4305 Hostages—Rainer-Bendix not set
 4331 The City that Stopped Hitler (Special)..... not set

Producers Releasing Corp. Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

- 362 Billy the Kid No. 6—Crabbe (58 m.) Aug. 16
 367 Lone Rider No. 5—Livingston (59 m.) Aug. 28
 356 Texas Rangers No. 6—Newill-O'Brien (63m)... Sept. 14
 368 Lone Rider No. 6—Livingston (59 m.) Sept. 30
 316 The Underdog—MacLane-Wynters Oct. 10
 315 Suspected Persons—English cast Oct. 26

(End of 1942-43 Season)

- 405 Submarine Alert—Litel-Baxter July 20
 401 Isle of Forgotten Sins—Carradine Aug. 15
 411 Danger! Women at Work—Kelly-Brian... Aug. 23
 459 Blazing Frontier—Crabbe (59 m.) Sept. 1
 406 Tiger Fangs—Buck-Duprez Sept. 10
 412 Girl from Monterey—Armida-Kennedy... Sept. 24
 451 Texas Rangers No. 1—Newill-O'Brien... Oct. 15
 460 The Devil Riders—Crabbe Nov. 5
 452 Texas Rangers No. 2—Newill-O'Brien... Nov. 20
 402 Harvest Melody—Lane-Downs Nov. 22

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

1942-43

- 228 Sleepy Lagoon—Canova-Day Sept. 5
 229 A Scream in the Dark—Lowery-McDonald... Oct. 15
 2307 The Old Barn Dance—Gene Autry (reissue)... Oct. 15
 257 Man From Music Mountain—Roy Rogers (71 min.) Oct. 30

(More to come)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- 361 Fugitive from Sonora—Barry (55 m.) July 1
 301 The Saint Meets the Tiger—Sinclair July 29
 362 Black Hills Express—Barry (55 m.) Aug. 15
 302 Hoosier Holiday—Evans-Hoosier Hot Shots... Sept. 13
 351 Beyond the Last Frontier—Dew-Burnette (55 min.) Sept. 18
 375 Death Valley Manhunt—Elliott (55 m.)... Sept. 25
 363 Man from the Rio Grande—Barry Oct. 18

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

Block 1

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 401 The Fallen Sparrow—Garfield-O'Hara) | |
| 402 Adventures of a Rookie—Carney-Brown) | No |
| 403 The Seventh Victim—Tom Conway) | National |
| 404 So This is Washington—Lum-Abner) | Release |
| 405 A Lady Takes a Chance—Arthur-Wayne) | Dates |

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 401 Bomber's Moon—Montgomery-Annabella ... Aug. 6
 402 Heaven Can Wait—Ameche-Tierney Aug. 13
 403 Holy Matrimony—Fields-Woolley Aug. 27
 404 Claudia—Young-McGuire Sept. 3
 405 Wintertime—Henie-Oakie Sept. 17
 406 In Old Chicago—Power-Faye-Ameche (reissue) Sept. 24
 407 Call of the Wild—Gable-Young (reissue)... Sept. 24
 408 Sweet Rosie O'Grady—Grable-Young Oct. 1

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- That Nasty Nuisance—Hal Roach July 1
 Yanks Ahoy—Hal Roach Aug. 6
 Victory Through Air Power—Disney Aug. 13
 Hi Diddle Diddle—Menjou-Scott Aug. 20
 Johnny Come Lately—James Cagney Sept. 3
 The Kansan—Dix-Wyatt Sept. 10
 Bar 20—Hopalong (54 min.) Oct. 1
 The Gunmaster—Trevor-Dekker Oct. 29

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 7011 Frontier Bad Man—Barrymore-Paige Aug. 6
 7064 We've Never Been Licked—Gwynne-Quine... Aug. 13
 7061 Phantom of the Opera—Eddy-Foster Aug. 27

(End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- Fired Wife—Barrymore-Paige-Allbritton ... Sept. 3
 The Strange Death of Adolph Hitler—Sondergard-Donath Sept. 10
 8028 Larceny With Music—Jones-Carlisle Sept. 10
 8009 Top Man—O'Connor-Foster Sept. 17

- 8024 Sherlock Holmes Faces Death—Rathbone...Sept. 17
 8023 Always a Bridesmaid—Knowles-McDonald...Sept. 24
 8081 Arizona Trail—Tex RitterSept. 24
 Corvette K-225—Scott-RainesOct. 1
 Crazy House—Olsen & JohnsonOct. 8
 H' Ya' Sailor—Woods-KnoxOct. 15
 8033 You're a Lucky Fellow Mr. Smith—Jones-
 Ankers-BurkeOct. 22
 8062 Flesh and Fantasy—Boyer-RobinsonOct. 29

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 302 Murder on the Waterfront—Loder.....Oct. 9
 304 Adventure in Iraq—Cavanaugh-Ford.....Oct. 9
 305 Princess O'Rourke—de Havilland-Cummings...Oct. 23

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE

Columbia—One Reel

- 5651 Community Sings No. 1 (10 m.).....July 29
 5851 Screen Snapshots No. 1 (10 m.).....Aug. 15
 5901 Birds on the Wing—Panoramic (9½ m.)...Aug. 26
 5801 Kings of Basketball—Sports (10 m.).....Aug. 27
 5652 Community Sings No. 2 (9 m.).....Aug. 27
 5951 Film-Vodvil No. 1 (10½ m.).....Sept. 10
 5852 Screen Snapshots No. 2 (10 m.).....Sept. 17
 5501 The Rocky Road to Ruin—Color Rhap.
 (8 min.)Sept. 23
 5653 Community Sings No. 3 (10 m.).....Sept. 24
 5751 Room and Bored—Fox & CrowSept. 30
 5802 Cue Wizards—SportsSept. 30
 5902 Babies by Bannister—PanoramicOct. 1
 5952 Film-Vodvil No. 2Oct. 8
 5701 Nursery Crimes—PhantasiesOct. 8
 5853 Screen Snapshots No. 3Oct. 15
 5654 Community Sings No. 4Oct. 22
 5502 Imagination—Color RhapsodiesOct. 29
 5803 Champ of Champions—SportsOct. 29
 5702 The Black & Blue Market—Phantasies.....Nov. 12
 5953 Film-Vodvil No. 3Nov. 19

Columbia—Two Reels

- 5425 Shot in the Escape—Gil. & Naz. (19 m.)...Aug. 6
 5124 The Living Corpse—Batman No. 5 (20 m.)...Aug. 13
 5401 I Can Hardly Wait—Stooges (16½ m.)...Aug. 13
 5125 Poison Peril—Batman No. 6 (20 m.).....Aug. 20
 5426 Farmer for a Day—Clyde (17½ m.).....Aug. 20
 5126 The Phoney Doctor—Batman No. 7 (20 m.)...Aug. 27
 5427 Quack Service—U. Merkel (16 m.).....Sept. 3
 5127 Lured By Radium—Batman No. 8 (20 m.)...Sept. 3
 5409 Pitchin' in the Kitchen—Herbert (18½ m.)...Sept. 10
 5128 The Sign of the Sphinx—Batman No. 9
 (20 min.)Sept. 10
 5129 Flying Spies—Batman No. 10 (20 m.).....Sept. 17
 5402 Dizzy Pilots—Stooges (17 m.)Sept. 24
 5130 A Nipponese Trap—Batman No. 11 (20 m.)...Sept. 24
 5131 Embers of Evil—Batman No. 12 (20 m.)...Oct. 1
 5421 A Rookie's Cookie—Brendel (17 m.).....Oct. 8
 5132 Eight Steps Down—Batman No. 13 (20 m.)...Oct. 8
 5133 The Executioner Strikes—Batman No. 14
 (20 m.)Oct. 15
 5428 Garden of Eatin'—SummervilleOct. 22
 5134 The Doom of the Rising Sun—Batman No. 15
 (20 min.)Oct. 22
 5429 You Dear Boy—Vera Vague.....Nov. 4

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel

- T-421 Glimpses of Mexico—Traveltalk (9 m.)...Aug. 21
 X-460 These are the Men—Special (12 m.).....Sept. 1
 S-470 Scrap Happy—Pete Smith (8 m.).....Sept. 4
 C-497 Little Miss Pinkerton—Our Gang (10 m.)...Sept. 18
 S-471 Fixin' Tricks—Pete Smith (9 m.).....Sept. 18
 S-472 Football Thrills—Pete Smith (9 m.).....Sept. 25
 T-422 Over the Andes—Traveltalk (9 m.).....Sept. 25
 W-452 War Dogs—Cartoon (8 m.)Oct. 9

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

- A-402 Heavenly Music—Special (22 m.).....May 1

Paramount—One Reel

- U2-6 The Truck that Flew—Mad. Mod. (9 m.)...Aug. 6
 E2-11 Woodpeckin'—Popeye (7 m.)Aug. 6
 J2-6 Popular Science No. 6—(10 m.).....Aug. 13
 A2-11 Three Bears in a Boat—Headliner (9 m.)...Aug. 20
 Y2-5 Speaking of Animals in the Garden (9 m.)...Aug. 20
 E2-12 Cartunes Ain't Human—Popeye (7 m.)...Aug. 27
 A2-12 Yours Truly—Headliner (10 m.).....Sept. 3
 R2-10 All Sails Set—Sportlight (9 m.).....Sept. 10
 L2-6 Unusual Occupations No. 6—(10 m.)Sept. 17
 A2-13 Stuff in Down with Everything (9 m.)...Sept. 24
 Y2-6 Speaking of Animals in the Desert (9 m.)...Sept. 24

(End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- U3-1 Jasper Goes Fishing—Mad. Mod. (8 m.)...Oct. 8
 J3-1 Popular Science No. 1—(10 m.).....Oct. 15
 R3-1 Mermaids on Parade—Sportlight (9 m.)...Oct. 22

Paramount—Two Reels

- FF3-1 Mardi Gras—Musical Parade (19 m.).....Oct. 1

RKO—One Reel

- 34106 Victory Vehicle—Disney (8 m.).....July 30
 34312 Champion Maker—Sportscope (9 m.).....July 16
 34313 Barnyard Golf—Sportscope (8 m.).....Aug. 13
 34107 Reason and Emotion—Disney (8 m.).....Aug. 27
 34204 Oil is Blood—Victory Special (8 m.).....Sept. 23

RKO—Two Reels

- 33110 Broadway Dimout—This is America (15m.)...July 30
 33111 Arctic Passage—This is America (20 m.)...Aug. 27

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

- 3852 Women in Blue—America Speaks (10 m.)...July 16
 (End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- 4501 Mighty Mouse Rides Again—Terry. (7 m.)...Aug. 6
 4151 Mormon Trails—Magic Carpet (9 m.).....Aug. 20
 4502 Camouflage—Terrytoon (7 m.).....Aug. 27
 4301 Dog Sense—Sports (9 m.).....Sept. 3
 4503 Somewhere in Egypt—Terrytoon (7 m.)...Sept. 17
 4251 Flying Gunners—Adventures (9 m.).....Sept. 24
 4504 Down with Cats—Terrytoon (7 m.).....Oct. 1
 4152 Coast of Strategy—Magic Carpet (9 m.)...Oct. 15
 4505 Alladin's Lamp—Terrytoon (7 m.).....Oct. 22
 4901 Fuss and Feathers—Lew Lehr (9 m.).....Oct. 29
 4506 The Lion & the Mouse—Terrytoon (7 m.)...Nov. 12
 4252 Snowland Sentinels—Adventures (9 m.)...Nov. 19
 4507 Yokel Duck Makes Good—Terrytoon (7 m.)...Nov. 26

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

Vol. 9 No. 12 Bill Jack Versus Adolph Hitler—
March of Time (20 m.) July 23
(End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

Vol. 9 No. 13 And Then Japan—March of Time
(20 min.) Aug. 13
Vol. 10 No. 1 Airways to Peace—March of Time
(17 min.) Sept. 17
Vol. 10 No. 2 Europe's Crossroads—March of Time
(18 min.) Oct. 8

Universal—One Reel**Beginning of 1943-44 Season**

8371 Wizard of Autos—Per. Odd. (9 m.) Sept. 20
8351 Who's Next—Variety Views (9 m.) Sept. 27
8231 Boogie Woogie Man—Yantz Cartune (7 m.) Sept. 27
8352 1A Dogs—Variety Views (9 m.) Oct. 18
8372 Farmer Gene Sarazen—Per. Odd. (9 m.) Oct. 25
8237 Meatless Tuesday—Andy Panda (7 m.) Oct. 25
8373 Fannie Hurst & Her Pets—Per. Odd. (9 m.) Nov. 22
8232 Barber of Seville—Lantz Cartune (7 m.) Nov. 29

Universal—Two Reels**Beginning of 1943-44 Season**

8121 Hit Tune Serenade—Musical (15 m.) Sept. 29
8122 Sweet Jam—Musical (15 m.) Oct. 27
8123 Choo-Choo Swing—Musical (15 m.) Nov. 24

Vitaphone—One Reel**1942-43**

8610 Scrap Happy Daffy—Looney Tune (7 m.) Aug. 21
8719 Hiss & Make Up—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.) Sept. 11
8720 Corny Concerto—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.) Sept. 25
8721 Fin-N-Caddie—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.) Oct. 23
8722 Fally Hare—Mer. Mel. (7 m.) (re.) Oct. 30
8612 Daffy the Commando—Looney Tune (7 m.)
(re.) Nov. 6
8723 Inky and the Minna Bird—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)
(re.) Nov. 20
(More to come)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

9301 A Feud There Was—Mer. Mel. (reissue)
(7 min.) Sept. 11
9601 Hit Parade of the Gay Nineties—Mel. Mas.
(10 m.) Sept. 18
9402 Bees A' Buzzin—Varieties (10 m.) Sept. 18
9302 Early Bird Gets the Worm—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)
(reissue) Oct. 2
9501 Tropical Sport Land—Sports (10 m.) Oct. 9
9602 Sweetheart Serenade—Mel. Masters (10 m.) Oct. 23
9303 My Little Buckaroo—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)
(reissue) Nov. 6
9502 Desert Playground—Sports (10 m.) Nov. 13
9401 Alaskan Frontier—Varieties (10 m.) Nov. 13
9603 Cavalcade of the Dance—Mel. Mas. (10 m.) Nov. 20

Vitaphone—Two Reels**Beginning of 1943-44 Season**

9107 Oklahoma Outlaws—Santa Fe Trail West.
(20 m.) Sept. 24
9001 Women at War—Special (20 m.) Oct. 2
9101 Voice That Thrilled the World—Featurette
(20 m.) Oct. 16
9002 Behind the Big Top—Special (20 m.) Oct. 30
9108 Wagon Wheels West—Santa Fe Trail West
(20 m.) Nov. 27

NEWSWEEKLY**NEW YORK****RELEASE DATES****Pathe News**

45208 Wed. (E) Sept. 22
45109 Sat. (O) Sept. 25
45210 Wed. (E) Sept. 29
45111 Sat. (O) Oct. 2
45212 Wed. (E) Oct. 6
45113 Sat. (O) Oct. 9
45214 Wed. (E) Oct. 13
45115 Sat. (O) Oct. 16
45216 Wed. (E) Oct. 20
45117 Sat. (O) Oct. 23
45218 Wed. (E) Oct. 27
45119 Sat. (O) Oct. 30
45220 Wed. (E) Nov. 3
45121 Sat. (O) Nov. 6
45222 Wed. (E) Nov. 10
45123 Sat. (O) Nov. 13
45224 Wed. (E) Nov. 17

Fox Movietone

6 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 23
7 Tues. (O) ... Sept. 28
8 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 30
9 Tues. (O) ... Oct. 5
10 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 7
11 Tues. (O) ... Oct. 12
12 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 14
13 Tues. (O) ... Oct. 19
14 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 21
15 Tues. (O) ... Oct. 26
16 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 28
17 Tues. (O) ... Nov. 2
18 Thurs. (E) .. Nov. 4
19 Tues. (O) ... Nov. 9
20 Thurs. (E) .. Nov. 11
21 Tues. (O) ... Nov. 16
22 Thurs. (E) .. Nov. 18

Universal

225 Wed. (O) .. Sept. 22
226 Fri. (E) ... Sept. 24
227 Wed. (O) .. Sept. 29
228 Fri. (E) Oct. 1
229 Wed. (O) .. Oct. 6
230 Fri. (E) Oct. 8
231 Wed. (O) .. Oct. 13
232 Fri. (E) Oct. 15
233 Wed. (O) .. Oct. 20
234 Fri. (E) Oct. 22
235 Wed. (O) .. Oct. 27
236 Fri. (E) Oct. 29
237 Wed. (O) .. Nov. 3
238 Fri. (E) Nov. 5
239 Wed. (O) .. Nov. 10
240 Fri. (E) Nov. 12
241 Wed. (O) .. Nov. 17

Metrotone News

204 Thurs. (E) . Sept. 23
205 Tues. (O) .. Sept. 28
206 Thurs. (E) . Sept. 30
207 Tues. (O) .. Oct. 5
208 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 7
209 Tues. (O) .. Oct. 12
210 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 14
211 Tues. (O) .. Oct. 19
212 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 21
213 Tues. (O) .. Oct. 26
214 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 28
215 Tues. (O) .. Nov. 2
216 Thurs. (E) . Nov. 4
217 Tues. (O) .. Nov. 9
218 Thurs. (E) . Nov. 11
219 Tues. (O) .. Nov. 16
220 Thurs. (E) . Nov. 18

Paramount News

6 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 23
7 Sun. (O) ... Sept. 26
8 Thurs. (E) .. Sept. 30
9 Sun. (O) Oct. 3
10 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 7
11 Sun. (O) Oct. 10
12 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 14
13 Sun. (O) Oct. 17
14 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 21
15 Sun. (O) Oct. 24
16 Thurs. (E) .. Oct. 28
17 Sun. (O) Oct. 31
18 Thurs. (E) .. Nov. 4
19 Sun. (O) ... Nov. 7
20 Thurs. (E) .. Nov. 11
21 Sun. (O) Nov. 14
22 Thurs. (E) .. Nov. 18

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Devoted Chiefly to the Interests of the Exhibitors

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Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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No. 41

CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM SHOULD BE WELCOMED

About six months ago, when the *Stars and Stripes*, an army overseas newspaper, editorially spanked Hollywood for depicting the American service man as a sort of super-man, capable of unheard of feats of valor, *Motion Picture Daily* took exception to its criticisms by saying of the *Stars and Stripes'* editorial staff that "these young men who are rollicking in a bath of printers' ink at the expense of the American taxpayer say that flag-waving is sickening"; also, that these young men "do not know that minds far more mature—and seemingly more representative of American thought, are now giving careful attention to the content of films. . . ."

The *Daily* now takes exception to the remarks of Lieutenant Colonel Frank Capra, who, in a dispatch from London, is credited with saying that "Hollywood has not done a good job on some of its war films." Attributing "flag-waving" productions to "ignorance," Capra added: "I don't think they're making bad pictures knowingly . . . Hollywood is a long way from the war."

Admitting that Capra should know a bad picture when he sees one, the *Daily* states: "We wonder only whether he makes a bad speech knowingly."

In what is apparently intended as a jibe at Capra, the *Daily* cites a recent news item concerning two American soldiers who wandered behind enemy lines at Salerno and, after two days of dodging Nazi soldiers, returned safely to the Allied lines. Referring to this item, the *Daily* states: "Hollywood wouldn't consider the incident worthy of notice unless the two had returned with a Nazi General and two platoons of prisoners, leaving a trail of destruction and consternation behind them in enemy territory. Perhaps that's what Capra meant, but that's not 'ignorance.' That's box office."

It seems to this writer that *Motion Picture Daily*, in its zeal to defend the industry against criticism, even though such criticism is constructive and justified, stands ready to condemn any one who dares to criticize. It is also apparent that the *Daily* is concerned, not so much with the contents of the pictures, as with championing the infallibility of the makers of pictures. The mere fact that "phony" Hollywood heroics jar the sensitivities not only of our men in the armed forces, but also of the picture-going public in general, as well as of the people of our Allies, seems to be of little importance to the *Daily*. And when it lacks any other argument, it merely says, "That's box office," overlooking the fact that present-day box-office figures are high because of employment and business conditions, and not because of the pictures' quality—but, rather, despite the quality.

Frank Capra has made some very fine films; he is now making top-notch documentary films for the U. S. Army. He has earned the right to have his criticisms of motion pictures given serious and careful consideration. It is unfortunate that his remarks are branded as a "bad speech" just because he steps on some of Hollywood's tender toes.

We wonder only whether *Motion Picture Daily* makes a bad statement knowingly.

PAY NO HEED TO CONJECTURES

It seems as if the producers propagandists are at it again.

Under the glaring headline, "D of J Confused By Split On Decree," the September 27 issue of *Film Daily* states that "the many proposals for changes in the New York consent decree and the variety of comments of exhibitors on their experiences under the decree have had a tendency to confuse the Department of Justice rather than serve as a medium of clarification, it was reported Friday."

Continuing, *Film Daily* points out that "while most of the exhibitors appear in accord on certain changes in the decree and methods of selling, their approaches to the problem are said to be wide apart, so that the Department of Justice might easily take the position that the exhibition side of the industry, insofar as the independents are concerned, is not sure what it wants."

"In some quarters," the article continues, "the thought was advanced that it would have been more practical if the independent exhibitors as a whole had submitted a single, uniform formula from which Tom Clark, Assistant Attorney General, could get an overall picture of the exhibitors' wants."

Film Daily closes this "news item" by stating that Clark, at a proposed meeting with the distributor heads, "is expected to receive a consolidated proposal for decree changes that will represent the unified expression of the consenting distributors."

The italics in the aforementioned are ours. The phrases and words italicized are to emphasize the fact that nowhere in the article can there be found a definite source, authoritative or otherwise, to which any of the statements can be attributed; also to emphasize the fact that the article is not a legitimate news item. It is, instead, no more than a conjecture, presented in the form of a news item and written in a manner that will lead the independent exhibitors to believe that, if they should submit any further suggestions of proposals relating to the Consent Decree, it will serve only to confuse the Department of Justice in its quest to determine the independent exhibitors' wishes. And that, of course, is contrary to the expressed desire of the Department, which has requested that the inde-

(Continued on last page)

**"Paris After Dark" with George Sanders,
Philip Dorn and Brenda Marshall**

(20th Century-Fox, Oct. 15; time, 15 min.)

"Paris After Dark" is well produced and equally well acted, but it is no more than a fair program entertainment; it travels over familiar ground—resistance by an underground movement in a Nazi-held country. The story follows a routine formula, and it does not offer a new twist. There are moments of excitement and suspense, but for the most part the action is slow-moving. The sufferings of people under the Nazi yoke make for a depressing entertainment. Whether or not motion picture patrons are nowadays in the mood to accept this type of entertainment is a matter the exhibitor can best judge for himself:—

Because of his aristocratic background and affable manner, Dr. George Sanders, secret leader of the Paris underground movement, gains the complete confidence of Colonel Robert Lewis, a Nazi commandant. Assisting Sanders, both in espionage and in medicine, is Brenda Marshall, a nurse, whose husband (Philip Dorn) had just returned from a Nazi prison camp, broken in health and in spirit. Brenda, realizing that Dorn lived in abject fear of the Nazis, does not reveal to him her connection with the underground. Dorn is given a physical examination by Sanders, who finds that he is suffering from an incurable illness. Neither man informs Brenda of this. Sanders, through the Nazi commandant, learns that five hundred men are to be shipped to Germany as a labor battalion. He notifies the underground committee and calls a meeting at his home that night. Because of a remark passed by Marcel Dalio, a French traitor, indicating that an illicit relationship existed between Sanders and Brenda, Dorn believes this to be true when he follows Brenda to Sanders' home that night. Slapped when she returns home, Brenda leaves Dorn without explaining. Raymond Roe, Brenda's younger brother, one of those selected for labor conscription, determines to run away and join the Free French. Dorn unwittingly informs Dalio of Roe's plan, and the traitor immediately notifies the Gestapo. Roe is apprehended and shot by the commandant as an example. Brenda, witnessing this, shoots the commandant from a hospital window. Fifty hostages are seized and threatened with death unless the guilty person surrenders. Meanwhile Dorn, embittered by Roe's murder, comes to the realization that Dalio had betrayed the boy. He strangles the traitor. Learning that Brenda was an underground leader, and that she had shot the commandant, Dorn, to protect her and to gain the release of the hostages, confesses to the shooting. Sanders stops Brenda's attempt to clear Dorn by informing her of his incurable illness. She reconciles herself to Dorn's heroic fate.

Harold Buchman wrote the screen play, Andre Daven produced it, and Leonide Moguy directed it. Morally suitable for all.

**"Hi 'Ya Sailor" with Donald Woods
and Elyse Knox**

(Universal, Oct. 15; time, 62 min.)

This is another one of those "assembly-line" comedies with music specialized in by Universal; it should satisfy as a supporting feature. The film offers comedy, dancing, music, specialty acts, and a story that is extremely thin. That the story is light is of no consequence, since it merely serves as a framework for the

rest of the proceedings, which consists of songs by Donald Woods, Phyllis Brooks, and Ray Eberle; a comic ballroom dance by the Hacker Duo; dignified ballroom dancing by Mayris Chaney and two male partners; harmony singing by the Delta Rhythm Boys, the Leo Diamond Quintet, and the Neillson Sisters; a comedy monologue by George Beatty; and music by Wingy Minone and his orchestra. None of these specialty acts are outstanding, but all are entertaining:—

Informed by a fake music publisher that a song he had composed would be published for a fee of two hundred dollars, Donald Woods, a merchant seaman, persuades Eddie Quillan, Matt Willis, and Frank Jenks, his pals, to invest fifty dollars each in his song. When their ship docks in New York, Woods and his pals, with visions of collecting huge sums of money in song royalties, hail a cab driven by Elyse Knox, and head for the publisher's office. After a fruitless search for the man, the boys realize that they had been defrauded. To make matters worse, they had run up a huge taxi fare, and they were unable to pay Elyse. Embarrassed, they manage to elude her by hiding in a servicemen's canteen. Elyse, however, finds them. Phyllis Brooks, a famous songstress entertaining at the canteen, accidentally drops an expensive cigarette case, which is retrieved by Elyse. Feeling that the boys do not intend to cheat her out of the cab fare, Elyse proposes that she drive them to the swanky club where Phyllis sang, so that Woods could return the cigarette case, thus giving him an opportunity to ask her to introduce one of his songs. At the club, however, Woods is intercepted by Jerome Cowan, Phyllis' jealous manager, who believes him to be a secret sweetheart of the singer. Cowan, at the point of a gun, forces both Phyllis and Woods to go to his apartment, where he arranges for a number of his henchmen to give Woods a beating. Cowan's plan is thwarted by the arrival of Elyse and a swarm of girl taxicab drivers, who, armed with wrenches, subdue Cowan's gang. Phyllis, grateful to Woods and Elyse, introduces his song at the canteen. It is an immediate hit, and a music publisher buys it on the spot. Elyse receives her cab fare.

Stanley Roberts wrote the screen play, and Jean Yarbrough produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Fired Wife" with Robert Paige, Louise
Allbritton and Diana Barrymore**

(Universal, Sept. 3; time, 73 min.)

An amusing comedy-farce that belongs in the sophisticated class of entertainment. While it is not strong enough for single billing, it should hold its own as the top half of a double bill in situations where this type of entertainment is enjoyed. The story, which deals with the marital difficulties of a pair of ultra-modern newlyweds, has little human interest, and the characters are not the sort to arouse sympathy; it depends entirely for its entertainment on the comedy situations and sparkling dialogue. Robert Paige and Louise Allbritton, as the newlyweds, handle their sophisticated roles with ease; they make a promising romantic team. Diana Barrymore, as the other woman, is a disappointment. Moreover, the addition of weight has not helped her appearance:—

After a short acquaintance, Louise Allbritton, a stage director, and Robert Paige, a radio advertising

executive, marry. Their honeymoon plans are interrupted when Walter Abel, Louise's producer, who despised married women, offers her a new play to direct. Louise persuades Paige to keep their marriage a secret, so that she could work with Abel. Because George Dolenz, a foreigner and the play's leading man, openly shows his infatuation for Louise, Paige finds it difficult to control his jealousy. Matters come to a head when immigration authorities threaten to deport Dolenz. Abel, to save him for the play, suggests to Louise that she marry him so that he can become an American citizen. Paige finally informs Abel and Dolenz that he and Louise are married. Abel discharges her. Meanwhile Diana, disillusioned by Paige's marriage, disregards her broadcast obligations and goes on a drunken spree with Ernest Truex, a wealthy playboy. Paige traces her to Truex's home where he throws the playboy out of his own house. Truex calls the police and reporters. Diana deliberately complicates matters by making it appear as if Paige was in love with her and had come to defend her honor. As a result, Louise goes to Reno. Returning to New York after her divorce, Louise learns that she is to become a mother. Abel, to prevent her from reconciling with Paige, leads her to believe that Paige and Diana plan to marry. He also makes arrangements for her to marry Dolenz in a small Connecticut town. Rex Ingram, Paige's colored valet, learns of the scheme and informs Paige. After a hectic chase and numerous complications, Paige arrives at the courthouse in time to halt the marriage, and to win back Louise.

Michael Tessier and Ernest Pagano wrote the screen play, Alex Gottlieb produced it, and Charles Lamont directed it. The cast includes Alan Dinehart, Samuel S. Hinds, Walter Catlett and others.

Adult entertainment.

ABOUT INFLATION WITHIN THE INDUSTRY

Under the title, "Inflation—An Enemy That May Yet Defeat Us," the Indignant Exhibitors Forum of Cincinnati, Ohio, has this to say in a current bulletin:

"All the strength of our great nation is being mustered to combat two great enemies; inflation and the guys who thought 'might makes right.' We, of the Motion Picture Industry, are playing an important part in combating one of these evils (Hitler). But, where it comes to combating inflation, *profiteering* and *fair rationing* to all, it is another story. The good built up in one instance is more than offset by the bad in the other. When the distributors think of helping the war effort the way they have—they are proud and boastful—they have stolen the show! When they think of the industry in connection with combating inflation, they should turn their heads in shame.

"An exhibitor's idea of 'inflation' is as the word infers; buying and selling at some amount considerably higher than *true value*. Inflation plays havoc with all real things in everybody's life. That is a simple fact.

"With, but very few exceptions, the distributors have taken advantage of the emergency and *forced inflated prices on films*. They have created a 'one way' inflation within the industry, that is even worse than the general inflation. Within the automobile industry, buying and selling (not one without the other) of

automobiles is inflated by probably 20% beyond their 'true value.' Movies are being sold to the public at 'true value'—they are being bought by the exhibitor at from 20% to 50% beyond 'true value.' This, in spite of the fact, that there is no good reason for it. Movies should be produced for less and should not be in fewer numbers. There was no 'curtailment' except on set costs and raw film stock.

"If the distributors were to release picture for picture at the same average rental as they secured on their 1940-41 contracts—and considering the extra revenue from their own and other 'key run' theatres, it would give them exorbitant extra profits. No one could then point their finger at them and say anything about 'one way' inflation—*profiteering* and *fair rationing* to all.

"If an expert economist were to study this 'one way' inflation, he would probably condemn it as being unhealthy in the light of good business. If it were considered in the light of it being un-American, it would be condemned again. If the situation were surveyed as compared to operations in other industries, the economist would probably say: 'It's the most daring and amazing case of unwarranted inflation and *profiteering* known in the history of economics, let alone during the time when it is contrary to the policy of our Nation.'

"Through lack of foresight by the distributors, the situation has gotten completely out of hand and probably now is (it should be) causing their leaders many, many hours of anxious thinking and worry."

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AND MARCH 3, 1933, OF HARRISON'S REPORTS, published Weekly at New York, N. Y., for Oct. 1, 1943.

State of New York.

County of New York.

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Al Picoult, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Managing Editor of the HARRISON'S REPORTS and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Act of March 3, 1933, embodied in section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager, are:

Publisher, *Harrison's Reports, Inc., 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.*
Editor, *P. S. Harrison, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.*
Managing Editor, *Al Picoult, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.*
Business Manager, *None.*

2. That the owner is: *Harrison's Reports, Inc., 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.*

P. S. Harrison, 1270 6th Ave., New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent, or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: *None.*

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of bona fide owners; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation, has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

(Signed) AL PICOULT,
(Managing Editor).

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 29th day of September, 1943.

MICHAEL M. THALER,
(My commission expires March 30, 1944.)

pendents avail themselves of the opportunity to be heard.

It would indeed be a sorry state of affairs if the Department of Justice, to whom our Government entrusts the prosecution of cases that entail the sifting of many difficult problems, some of which are much more intricate than the Consent Decree, would find itself in a state of confusion because of a few suggestions and proposals submitted by the independent exhibitors. As a matter of fact, *Film Daily's* article might well be considered an insult to the capabilities of Tom Clark and his aides.

As *Film Daily* itself acknowledges, most of the exhibitors appear to be in accord with their opposition to some of the important phases of the decree, such as the sale of product in blocks of five, and the inadequate arbitration provisions. That the exhibitors' approaches to these problems are not in full harmony is understandable; the problems and conditions faced by a group of exhibitors in one section of the country are oftentimes different from those faced by exhibitors in other sections of the country. This fact in itself brands as impractical the "thought" that was advanced in *Film Daily* that "it would have been more practical if the independent exhibitors as a whole had submitted a single, uniform formula" to Clark. The receipt of varied proposals and opinions is a much more practical system, for in that way the Department of Justice, after a thorough study of these different viewpoints, will be enabled to formulate a plan that will do the most good to the greatest number and, it is to be hoped, will still protect the interests of those who are in the minority.

Film Daily is not the only one of the trade papers that indulge in this producer propaganda. A number of the others are equally guilty.

Pay no heed to these conjectures. In spreading the rumors that the Department of Justice is confused by the varied exhibitor comments, the object of the producer propagandists is to confuse and discourage the exhibitors.

And do not fear that Tom Clark, who is making a very close study of exhibitor-distributor relations, will be influenced by any of this false propaganda. Make your feelings and your ideas known to him. He wants you to do so. Only then will he be in a position to understand your problems better and to serve your interests best.

THE LEGION OF DECENCY STATES ITS POSITION

In a denial of the implied statements made by *Boxoffice* in an article regarding the move for closer cooperation between the Catholic Legion of Decency and National Allied, which was discussed in these columns last week, the Very Rev. Msgr. John J. McClafferty, Executive secretary of the Legion, has sent the following letter to that paper:

"With reference to the article 'Catholic Legion of Decency Poised for New Film Attack' which appears on page six of the September 1, 1943 issue of 'Boxoffice,' I wish to make the following observation.

"The Legion of Decency is not in any alliance with Allied States Ass'n of Independent Exhibitors or any other group with the view to furthering the passage of any anti-block booking legislative proposal in Congress.

"In the matter of anti-block booking proposals, the Legion in March 1936 during the hearing on the Pettingill Bill stated that it saw 'in legislative measures not a means of securing a wholesome screen but rather a grave danger of political censorship.' This excerpt from the statement then made is pertinent.

"The Legion of Decency has had one simple clear objective—to insure for the public, as legitimate recreation, a wholesome screen against which there could be no objections on moral grounds. Its strongest weapon has been an aroused public opinion, and public opinion will continue to be the most effectual safeguard against salacious motion pictures. The Legion of Decency regards public opinion as a much safer guide than would be any regulations made by political appointees in a Federal agency."

"Since March 1936 the Legion has made no statement which would indicate any different position or policy.

"The concern of the Legion is with the moral content of motion pictures. The Legion does not concern itself with matters of commercial arrangements within the industry.

"Allied officials have visited the Legion office. They have expressed the desire to cooperate in the cause of screen morality. The Legion welcomes this expression as it welcomes such expression from any person, organization, agency or company.

"Allied officials requested that they be notified when the Legion classified a film as 'C.' The Legion plans thus to notify Allied. This notification contemplates nothing more than an immediate transmittal of a decision which in the past, whenever the decision has been made, has been promptly made public.

"The above I am confident you will publish in the forthcoming issue of 'Boxoffice' so that the record may be set straight and that any misunderstanding or misinterpretation may be corrected."

It should be noted that *Boxoffice*, in fairness to both the Legion and Allied, has reproduced Msgr. McClafferty's letter, giving it the same prominence as the article in which it was concluded that the Legion-Allied affiliation was of a political nature.

A RESOLUTION AGAINST METRO'S SELLING POLICY

At a meeting of the Allied Theatre Owners of New Jersey, held on Monday, September 27, 1943, the following resolution was passed:

"WHEREAS the Metro policy of licensing feature pictures requires exhibitors to contract for such pictures without any designation of prices, thereby taking an unfair and unjust advantage of the exhibitors' need for such pictures; and

"WHEREAS the producers' monopoly of the available supply of feature pictures compels exhibitors to license such pictures from Metro even though they do not know what prices they must pay for them until Metro chooses to designate such prices at any time it pleases after execution of the contract and before play-date of each picture licensed;

"Now therefore be it RESOLVED that the Allied Theatre Owners of New Jersey, Inc., enter their protest against the Metro policy of selling feature pictures, and that copies of this Resolution be forwarded to Metro and to the press."

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No. 42

Allied's Report on the Consent Decree Survey

The experiences of the independent exhibitors under the Consent Decree, and their views as to the changes that should be made in it, are embodied in an eleven page report sent to Tom Clark, United States Assistant Attorney General, by Abram F. Myers, General Counsel of Allied States Association.

Myers' report is a summarization of the exhibitors' replies to Allied's Consent Decree questionnaire, which was reproduced in the September 4 issue of this paper. According to Myers, the Allied survey is representative of all classes of "truly independent theatres," with the exception of the large unaffiliated circuits such as Schine, Griffith, and Crescent, and the replies received "clearly are representative of the views of the independent exhibitors under accepted principles of opinion sampling."

In his report, Myers points out carefully to Clark that the survey undertaken by Allied was "subordinate to and not in contravention of" his organization's position that "theatre divorcement and dissolution, fortified by proper injunctions, afford the only permanent and effective cure for monopolistic conditions in the motion picture industry."

Except for the introductory paragraphs, explaining the purpose of the survey and outlining the manner in which the questionnaires were summarized, Myers' report, dated October 4, is reproduced here in its entirety:

"III. Block-booking. (a) Statistics. Questions Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 12 all have a bearing on this general subject. While the questions overlap to a certain extent they are designed to provoke thought on all phases of the problem and to develop fully whether under the consent decree any considerable freedom of choice in licensing feature films and short-subjects has been achieved. Summarizing the summaries, 210 exhibitors, operating 652 theatres, reported that the consenting distributors, since the entry of the consent decree, have insisted upon the licensing of unwanted feature pictures as a condition to licensing the features that the exhibitors particularly wanted. Only 112 exhibitors, with 323 theatres, reported to the contrary. As regards the forcing of short-subjects with features, 204 exhibitors, with 460 theatres, reported that the practice had continued, while a total of 133 exhibitors, with 543 theatres, reported that they had encountered no difficulty in this particular. The reporting exhibitors not accounted for in these totals did not answer these questions.

"Question 12 called for an expression of opinion as to whether the five-picture selling plan had eliminated the evils of compulsory block-booking. The negative vote was overwhelming—311 exhibitors, representing 867 theatres. Only 26 exhibitors, with 59 theatres, ventured the opinion that the consent decree selling method had eliminated even partially (as most of them qualified their answers) such evils.

"(b) Forcing features. The statistics are damning, but to really appreciate the distributors' flagrant disregard of both the letter and spirit of the decree which they signed, it is necessary to read the statements of the exhibitors wherein they describe the methods employed. From these it appears that, contrary to Section IV (a), of the decree, which provided 'that the license . . . of one group of features shall not be conditioned upon the licensing of another feature or group of features,' it has been well-nigh impossible for an independent exhibitor to skip a group of pictures. If he did pass a group or groups, and then sought to license a later

group, he was required to take all, or a 'representative number,' of features which he had passed up, in order to accomplish his purpose. The exhibitors cite instances occurring while Sec. IV (a) was in effect; their comments give the impression that this has become standard practice since that provision lapsed.

"The decree did not afford the exhibitors any right of selection within a group and, as a matter of course such privilege was rarely granted. Even when granted, the price of the pictures eliminated was added to the price of those licensed, so that the old policy of 'play or pay' was continued unchanged. The failure of the decree to afford any right to cancel out licensed pictures resulted in depriving the exhibitors of the limited cancellation privileges which they enjoyed prior to the entry of the decree.

"Not only are the time-worn methods of the distributors in forcing pictures revealed by the survey, but something new has been added. The distributors have moved on from the compulsory block-booking of pictures to the block-booking of theatres. That is to say, if an exhibitor operates more than one theatre, the distributors insist that he license pictures for all his theatres as a condition of obtaining pictures for one. The opinion of the Appeal Board in the Welden Theatre Case (No. 71) explains the technique. A number of instances are cited in the summaries. To illustrate how oppressive this can be, one exhibitor reports that Paramount will not sell him pictures for one town, where he needs them, unless he also buys them for another town, where he has a surplus.

"The enormity of the defendants' offense in scuttling the decree must be judged in the light of what was expected of them when the decree was entered. In announcing the decree the Department of Justice solemnly assured the public that

"'Under the method of selling prescribed by the decree, if an exhibitor finds that a particular group of pictures contains some that are objectionable, he can request that these pictures be eliminated or that other pictures be substituted for them. If the distributor refuses to grant his request, the exhibitor is in a position to reject the group without jeopardizing his entire year's supply of films.'

"(c) Forcing shorts. A number of exhibitors report that there has been a gradual easing of the pressure on short-subjects since the entry of the decree. As we have seen, fewer exhibitors report the forcing of shorts than the forcing of features. Nevertheless, the questionnaires reveal that the practice is still prevalent in all territories and the methods employed by the distributors show a conscious purpose to evade the decree and border on the sordid. In many cases the distributors sent out their salesmen to sell short-subjects in advance of offering any of their feature pictures. If the shorts were not bought, the features were not offered. If an application for features was unaccompanied by an application for shorts, or by an application for what the distributor thought was an inadequate amount of shorts, the bid for features was rejected. Salesmen have made it understood that if shorts were not licensed, the cost would be added to the price of the features. If an exhibitor falls behind in the booking of shorts, the exchange sometimes will not permit him to date features until he catches up on his shorts. All this and more too is set forth in the summaries in the words of the reporting exhibitors.

(Continued on last page)

**"Here Comes Elmer" with Al Pearce,
Dale Evans, Gloria Stuart and
Frank Albertson**

(Republic, November 15; time, 74 min.)

In spite of the fact that the story is thin, this program comedy with music is entertaining. It should particularly amuse those who are interested in seeing and hearing Al Pearce, a great radio favorite, for he is the central character of the story, indulging in the type of antics that appeal to his fans. The comedy situations and laughs are brought about by Pearce's dual role—as himself and as "Elmer Blurt," a dim-witted salesman. Their resemblance results in one being mistaken for the other, causing no end of confusion to Pearce's friends. Much of the comedy is of the slapstick variety. Other popular radio entertainers in the cast are Artie Auerbach, the "Kitzel" on Pearce's radio program; Arlene Harris, a singing comedienne; and Pinky Tomlin, The Sportsmen, and the King Cole Trio—all sing popular songs. Jan Garber and his band furnish the music:—

Because of disparaging remarks made by a pet parrot during a broadcast, Al Pearce and his radio troupe are discharged by their sponsor. Annoyed at being stranded without funds, Frank Albertson, leader of the band with Pearce's show, asks for a release from his contract. Pearce refuses his request. Albertson telephones Dale Evans, his girl-friend and secretary to Thurston Hall, owner of a radio network, and learns that there is an opening for his band in a New York night-club. To induce Pearce to go to New York, Albertson sends him a fake wire offering him a spot on Hill's network. Pearce believes the wire, but is without funds to go to New York. Albertson secures financing for the trip from Arlene Harris, a middle-aged spinster, who was fond of Pearce, by promising her a chance to sing with the band. In New York, Hall, infuriated at the fake stunt, throws Pearce and the troupe out of his office. Albertson obtains the night-club engagement, and Pearce, disillusioned, disappears and secures employment as a salesman of household appliances in company with Elmer Blurt (also played by Pearce), whom he resembled closely. Meanwhile Dale learns that a radio sponsor seeks a new show. Together with Gloria Stuart, Pearce's mid-western girl-friend, Dale locates Pearce in time for the audition. During his routine, Pearce is accidentally struck on the head. He becomes an amnesia victim and disappears. In the search that follows, Elmer is found and mistaken for Pearce. He is repeatedly struck on the head with vases to cure him of his supposed amnesia. After a series of incidents, in which Arlene marries Elmer in the belief that he is Pearce, it all turns out for the best when Pearce arrives in time for a big broadcast, the success of which earns the troupe a contract.

Jack Townley and Stanley Davis wrote the screen play, Armand Schaefer produced it, and Joseph Santley directed it. The cast includes Wally Vernon, Chester Clute, Luis Alberni and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"The Strange Death of Adolph Hitler" with
Ludwig Donath and Gale Sondergaard**

(Universal, September 10; time, 72 min.)

Ordinary program fare. The best that can be said of it is that it has an exploitable title. The story, though novel, is implausible; it revolves around a minor Nazi official, whose features are changed through plastic surgery so that he is an exact double of Hitler, whom he is compelled to impersonate lest harm befall his family. Although his predicament provides several dramatic situations, the story is so far-fetched that it can never be taken seriously. Most of the situations demand that the spectator stretch his imagination to a considerable degree. One is sympathetic to the main characters, but it is not enough to hold the interest. The ending is tragic:—

As the result of his giving a perfect imitation of Hitler for his office aides, Ludwig Donath, a minor Vienna official, is arrested by the Gestapo. He is knocked unconscious and, by the use of plastic surgery, his features are changed into a likeness of Hitler. Gale Sondergaard, Donath's wife, and their two children (Merrill Rodin and Charles Bates), are notified that he had been shot for treason. Gestapo officials inform Donath that he will have to pose as Hitler when the occasion demands it, threatening to harm his family if he refuses. Donath decides to cooperate, hoping for an opportunity to use the subterfuge to his advantage. Meanwhile

Donath's wife, manhandled by Nazi soldiers billeted in her home, injures one of them. She is arrested and told that, as an unmarried woman, it was her duty to entertain the soldiers. George Dolenz, a family friend, rescues her by declaring that she is pledged to wed him. They are married immediately. Brought to Vienna to pose as Hitler, Donath, through a clever ruse, manages to slip away from his guards. He visits his home and learns from the children, who fail to recognize him, that Gale had married Dolenz. Careful to avoid Gale, Donath reveals himself to Dolenz and informs him of a plan to kill Hitler. Dolenz promises to aid him. The following day, Hitler (also played by Donath) secretly leaves Vienna, leaving Donath to deliver a speech for him. Unknown to Dolenz, Gale had determined to murder Hitler; her children had been taken away from her. Returning to his hotel after the speech, Donath sees Gale in the crowd. He cleverly compels the guards to bring her into the hotel. Not recognizing him, Gale whips out a gun and kills him. She is in turn shot dead by the guards.

Fritz Kortner and Joe May wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and James Hogan directed it. The cast includes Ludwig Stossel, Joan Blair and others.

Some of the sequences are objectionable for children.

**"The North Star" with Walter Huston,
Dana Andrews and Anne Baxter**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 105 min.)

A stirring war drama; it ranks high among the better war films produced in Hollywood. Although the story presents nothing unusual, it is, nevertheless, a highly dramatic and exciting account of how the Nazi invasion of Russia was heroically met by the defenseless, peace-loving peasants of a Russian border village. The film is unrelenting in its depiction of Nazi bestiality. The sequences showing the Nazis draining the blood of the village children for transfusion to their wounded soldiers may prove too harrowing for those with sensitive stomachs. The early part of the film, though drawn out, is a colorful depiction of the village, its people, and their peaceful ways. This idyllic setting serves to accentuate the brutality of the Nazi invasion. From the moment the Nazis take possession of the village until the finish where it is recaptured by guerrilla fighters, the action is tensely exciting. The production values are excellent, as are the performances:—

After a village feast in celebration of the prosperous farming season and the end of the school term, Anne Baxter and Farley Granger, youthful lovers, join Jane Withers and her younger brother (Eric Roberts) on a walking trip to Kiev for their first glimpse of a large city. Dana Andrews, Granger's older brother and a Soviet flyer, accompanies the youngsters. Tired and foot-sore after a day of walking, the group welcomes a lift from Walter Brennan, elderly leader of a wagon train bound for Kiev. Their merriment is brought to a halt by a sudden, vicious attack by Nazi planes. Andrews' quick thinking saves the lives of his immediate group. The others in the wagon train are killed. Back in the village, where Nazi bombs had done severe damage, Dean Jagger, Anne's father, organizes the villagers. He takes the able-bodied men to the hills to fight as guerrillas, leaving the others to stay behind to destroy their homes and crops when the Nazis arrive. Meanwhile a truck carrying arms to the guerrillas is destroyed by a Nazi plane and found by Andrews' group. Piling the arms onto Brennan's wagon, Andrews instructs the group how to reach the guerrillas and leaves them to rejoin his squadron. Later, he loses his life in a suicide dive into a German formation of tanks and guns. With the arrival of the Nazis, the villagers set fire to their homes. The invaders, however, extinguish the flames. Ann Harding, Jagger's wife, is crippled by the Nazis because of her refusal to disclose her husband's whereabouts. Embittered when the Nazis seize the Russian children and drain their blood for transfusion to the German wounded, Walter Huston, the village doctor, goes to the guerrillas' hideout and rouses them to make an immediate attack. At the height of the attack, the youngsters, after a hazardous journey, in which Jane had been killed and Granger blinded, arrive with the arms. The Nazis are wiped out in a furious fight. The battle over, the remaining villagers head west, determined to defend their country.

Lillian Hellman wrote the original story and screenplay, Samuel Goldwyn produced it, and Lewis Milestone directed it. William Cameron Menzies was the associate producer.

Morally suitable for all.

"Dangerous Blondes" with Allyn Joslyn, Evelyn Keyes and Edmund Lowe

(Columbia, September 23; time, 80 min.)

Those who like murder mystery stories with plenty of comedy should enjoy this fast-moving program melodrama. The story and characters are reminiscent of the "Thin Man" pictures, with Allyn Joslyn and Evelyn Keyes as the young married couple who set out to solve a number of murders. Comedy is mixed with the melodrama, and even at times when the picture is most exciting, the spectator is compelled to laugh because of the way in which the excitement is brought about. Suspense is sustained throughout, and the identity of the murderer is not revealed until the finish:—

Bursting into the apartment of Evelyn Keyes, Anita Louise hysterically tells her that she fears a murder will take place at the photography studio where she was employed. Evelyn promises to come to the studio with Allyn Joslyn, her husband, a popular detective fiction writer. At the studios, Joslyn and Evelyn meet Edmund Lowe the owner, and John Hubbard and Michael Duane, his assistants. All were preoccupied with arranging a commercial photograph featuring Mary Forbes, wealthy society matron, who was the aunt of Ann Savage, Lowe's wife. As the models take their places, Miss Forbes, without explanation, refuses to be photographed with Bess Flowers, one of the models. Lowe is compelled to dismiss Miss Flowers. Soon after, Miss Forbes is found murdered in her dressing room. Inspector Frank Craven arrives on the scene, and his investigation discloses that Miss Forbes had been stabbed with a carving knife. Craven learns also that Miss Flowers had been the first wife of Miss Forbes' husband. Detectives trace Miss Flowers to her apartment, where she is found dead, apparently a suicide from an overdose of sleeping tablets. The missing knife is found among her effects. Joslyn refuses to accept Craven's conclusion that the model had murdered Miss Forbes and then committed suicide. Aided by Evelyn, Joslyn carries on a private investigation. He learns that Ann, who was Mrs. Forbes' sole heir, planned to divorce Lowe; also, that Anita was in love with Lowe. When Ann is murdered and Anita disappears, Lowe is suspected. Joslyn, believing him to be innocent, plays a hunch. He accuses both Hubbard and Duane of the crimes and, employing a clever ruse, succeeds in forcing a confession from Hubbard.

Richard Flournoy and Jack Henley wrote the screen play, Samuel Bischoff produced it, and Leigh Johnson directed it. The cast includes William Demarest, John Abbott, Frank Sully and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Chance of a Lifetime" with Chester Morris

(Columbia, October 26; time, 66 min.)

A fair addition to the "Boston Blackie" series of comedy-melodramas. As is the case with most of the pictures in this series, the story is far-fetched. Yet it should fit adequately in a double-feature program in neighborhood theatres, where patrons are not too discriminating, since the action is fast-moving and there is plentiful comedy. Once again Chester Morris, as the reformed criminal, is suspected of a crime he did not commit and, as usual, he outwits the "dumb" detective, clearing himself:—

On the plea of Chester Morris, the prison board agrees to release in his custody a number of prisoners for jobs in a defense plant, despite the opposition of Inspector Richard Lane, Morris' old enemy. Morris arranges with Lloyd Corrigan, a manufacturer, to employ the convicts and to help rehabilitate them. Permitted to spend two days with his wife and child before starting work, Erik Rolf, one of the convicts, utilizes his time to recover sixty thousand dollars he had stolen and hidden prior to his being jailed. On his wife's plea that he reform, Rolf agrees to turn the money over to the police. But two former pals visit Rolf and demand that he turn the money over to them. In the ensuing scuffle, one of the men is killed and the other (Douglas Fowley) slips away. Morris, searching for Rolf, because of his failure to report for work, arrives at the apartment immediately after the shooting. Determined to keep Rolf out of trouble, Morris takes the money and makes him promise

not to reveal what happened; Morris planned to take the blame for the killing, in the hope that he might trap Fowley. After leading Lane to believe that he was responsible for the murder, Morris escapes from the inspector and sets out to find Fowley. Meanwhile Fowley, seeking to compel Rolf to reveal the whereabouts of the money, kidnaps the convict's wife and child. Morris, aided by George E. Stone, his pal, plans to trap Fowley. Disguising themselves as charwomen, they steal the money from the police property room. When the newspapers print the story, Fowley decides to get the money from Morris. Morris captures Fowley and, aided by his convict friends, forces Fowley to confess to the murder. Morris is cleared of suspicion, as is Rolf, and the convicts' rehabilitation program is pronounced a success.

Paul Yawitz wrote the screen play, Wallace MacDonald produced it, and William Castle directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

ALLIED'S REPORT ON THE CONSENT DECREE SURVEY

(Continued from back page)

"(b) Preferred playing time. Not satisfied with forcing a percentage arrangement on every picture deemed (in their own estimation) to be above 'program' calibre, the distributors have insisted that such pictures be played on Saturday or Sunday, or whatever day or combination of days will be most profitable. Question No. 15 asked whether the distributors had increased their demands for preferred time. The returns showed that such demands had increased in about the same proportion as demands for percentage playing. The result: 273 exhibitors, with 956 theatres, reported that demands for preferred time had increased; 64 exhibitors, with 112 theatres, that they had not.

"Exhibitors usually measure their weekly receipts on a point system—three points for Sunday, two for Saturday, and one for each remaining day in the week. Sometimes weekends are rated as high as seven-tenths of the whole. From this it is easy to understand how enforced percentage playing on week-ends drains off the earnings of the theatres.

"There is another aspect of these demands for preferred time that directly affects the public. It deprives the exhibitor, who knows his patrons and the kind of pictures they prefer, of any control over the spotting of his pictures. Saturday and Sunday are the days of maximum attendance by children and the exhibitors can not give them the whole-some action pictures they prefer. The questionnaires contain many examples of this; one will suffice: 'Very frequently we are forced to show strictly adult pictures, such as "Constant Nymph" and "DuBarry Was A Lady," on Saturday or Sunday, the favorite days for children's attendance.'

"One exhibitor, speaking of a very small situation, said that it did not make much difference to him in dollars and cents but he recognized that it is a step in the growing domination of the independent theatres—a little more control of my theatre that is lost."

"(c) Picture shortage. It was well-known to the Department when it issued its statement dated August 17, 1942, that the consenting companies had on hand approximately 100 completed pictures. While the reporting exhibitors were in no position to supply facts in the sole possession of the distributors, it is generally known that the hoarding of completed pictures still exists and that sorely needed product is being withheld from release. Thus the difficulties inherent in the five-picture plan have been aggravated by an artificial picture shortage. In response to Question No. 17, 120 exhibitors, with 541 theatres, reported that they were suffering from this condition.

"According to several exhibitors the condition is made still worse by the newly adopted policy of with-drawing from service prints of pictures already released much earlier than formerly, making it impossible to gain relief from the shortage by licensing older product.

(To be concluded next week)

"(d) Provisions should be clear and must be enforced by the Government. In revising the consent decree the provisions relating to compulsory block-booking and the forcing of short-subjects should be so plainly worded and comprehensive that even the resourceful distributors can not devise methods for evading them. This applies whether the provision is for selling in groups, for adequate identification, for a cancellation privilege, or against the forcing of shorts.

"A fundamental weakness of the consent decree is that it casts upon the exhibitors the burden of enforcing provisions against practices that involve the public interest, such as compulsory block-booking, forcing shorts, etc. Whatever may be said in favor of arbitration proceedings to enforce rights in which the public is not primarily interested—such as clearance—the Government should assume responsibility for the observance of all regulations in the interest of the public. The following from Monograph No. 43 of the Temporary National Economic Committee, in which the consent decree is severely criticized, bears out our point:

"'Ordinarily, enforcement of a consent decree is assumed by the Department of Justice. When the Department feels that a provision of a decree has been violated, the Department can ask that the violator be adjudged in contempt of court and request that an appropriate penalty be imposed. It appears that in this case the Department has specifically resigned these powers. Enforcement of the decree is, instead, imposed on the members of the industry and to a considerable extent on the weaker members of the industry.'

"Section IV (b) provides for arbitration proceedings to be instituted by the exhibitors in order to prevent violations of the section. Section XVI provides, in substance, that no consenting defendant shall be deemed to have violated any provision for which arbitration is provided unless such defendant refuses to arbitrate or to abide by an award. This conferred on the defendants immunity from prosecution for contempt for even the most flagrant violations of the decree.

"It has been demonstrated that arbitration as provided in the decree is no deterrent to the practice of compulsory block-booking by these defendants. The amount involved in a dispute over a small group of pictures does not warrant the expense of a proceeding, especially by an exhibitor located at some distance from the exchange center where the proceeding must be conducted. The time required would, in any event, defeat the purpose of the proceeding since the pictures would pass the exhibitor's availability before a final award could be made. Moreover, as shown by numerous entries on the questionnaires, the exhibitors are genuinely afraid to risk retaliation by questioning the distributors' tactics unless the Government is standing by to protect them. Finally, the aggregate of their spoils from their scowfall attitude is so great that the distributors are not concerned by arbitration proceedings. An arbitrator can not impose a heavy fine or send an offender to jail.

"As one exhibitor expressed it, the distributors are 'as block-booking minded as ever' and if the Department is to achieve the ideal described in its press releases it will have to take over the enforcement of whatever provisions on this subject are written into the decree. The distributors doubtless will challenge the assertions of this report by citing instructions allegedly given to their sales forces to obey the decree and will seek to shift the blame to their lowly employees. But *respondeat superior* must be the rule for the distributors as it is for all others. Moreover, there is reason for assuming that they are guilty of more than mere lack of diligence. Each company holds an annual sales convention at which the field forces are given 'pep' talks and instructed how to sell their products. It is generally understood that quotas are assigned and that bonuses are paid the sales executives, branch managers and salesmen who reach or exceed their quotas. The company executives have ample opportunity to prevent forcing, but the pressure is all in the opposite direction.

"(e) Exhibitors' preference as to selling method. Question No. 4 presented to the exhibitors four separate selling plans and invited them to indicate their choice. The Department of Justice in a statement issued August 17, 1942, declared its unalterable opposition to any return to blind selling as it was practiced before the entry of the consent decree. Allied in submitting its questionnaire, did not allow any choice that involved a return to pre-decree practice. Plan (d) involves selling of a full season's output of 'adequately identified' pictures with a 20% cancellation privi-

lege. The problem of adequately identifying pictures and coupling such identification with a cancellation right so as to avoid a return to blind booking is discussed in the report of the undersigned to the board of directors of Allied States Association dated April 30 (pp. 37-39), a copy of which was sent to the Department.

"The several plans submitted and the votes thereon are as follows:

"(a) The five-picture plan, with trade showings, as provided in the consent decree—7 exhibitors and 26 theatres.

"(b) The selling of trade-shown pictures in such groups as the distributor and exhibitor may agree upon, with provision that the exhibitor may not be required to license pictures he does not want in order to get the pictures he does want—60 exhibitors and 148 theatres.

"(c) The selling of trade-shown or adequately identified pictures in groups containing approximately one-fourth of the annual output, with a 20% cancellation—84 exhibitors and 286 theatres.

"(d) The selling of a full season's output, adequately identified, with a 20% cancellation—217 exhibitors and 627 theatres.

"(e) Other methods which exhibitors may care to suggest—14 exhibitors and 26 theatres.

"Thus the consent decree method received virtually no support. The organized exhibitors were opposed to the method when it was adopted and experience has increased their bitterness. As shown under the next heading the distributors killed whatever chance of success the plan might have had by using it as a lever for jacking up prices. As indicated by their comments, some of those who voted for (d) were in full reaction from exorbitant film rentals and wanted to get as far away from the five-picture plan as possible. Those who voted for alternate plans (b) and (c) frequently indicated that they would be satisfied with either. Therefore, it is largely a question of (d) against the field.

"IV. Economics of the decree. The blunt facts revealed by the questionnaires are that under the consent decree the distributors have (a) raised film rentals to levels wholly unjustified by any increase in the cost of improvement in the quality of the product; (b) have increased their net profits beyond their own dreams of avarice; and (c) have not merely expanded their theatre holdings by acquisitions and construction but have contrived to drain off the greater part of the earnings and dominate and control the operating policies of the independent theatres by means of forced percentage playing.

"(a) High film rentals. Question No. 15 inquired whether the five-picture plan had had the effect unduly to increase film rentals. The vote was practically unanimous—339 exhibitors and 1112 theatres 'yes' to 25 exhibitors and 43 theatres 'no.'

"This vote reflects the deep-seated conviction of the exhibitors that the five-picture plan is responsible for the intolerable conditions that have arisen since the decree was entered. The questionnaires show that the tremendous increase in the exhibitors' film cost is due mainly to increased demands for percentage playing. It may be argued that the distributors could have brought this about under the old system and that they, not the five-picture plan, are responsible. The exhibitors in their comment supply the answer. Prior to the decree only one company (Metro) had a fixed policy with respect to percentage playing and it required only a few such engagements during a season. The others would occasionally sell a few on percentage, but not many. When they were selling a whole season's product the distributors had to sell all their percentage pictures at one time. The exhibitor was fortified by a backlog of product and his resistance was high. Under the five-picture plan all consenting companies began to demand one or more percentage pictures in each group. The picture shortage and other factors herein enumerated lowered the exhibitors' resistance. Then there is the psychological factor mentioned by one exhibitor who commented: 'Easier to sell an idea on one picture at high percentage in each group of five than to sell 10 in a block of 50.'

"Another exhibitor put it this way: '... The distributors found they could extort more money when they took it in smaller bunches. We now play approximately 25 percentage pictures a year. Before the decree we played 8 percentage pictures a year.'

(Continued on inside page)

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ALLIED'S REPORT ON THE CONSENT DECREE SURVEY

(Continued from last week)

"The distributors may try to explain the existing shortage by claiming it is the result of extended runs being given many pictures by first-runs in the metropolitan areas. Certainly it is due in substantial measure to the many newly-created 'moveovers' cited by the reporting exhibitors pursuant to Question 18. But that does not alter the fact of responsibility, since the distributors control the first-run metropolitan theatres and the cases cited involve affiliated houses. The warranted conclusion is that the steadily declining number of releases, the extended playing time and the creation of additional first-runs by means of moveovers are all a part of a general scheme to milk the pictures as dry as possible before making them available to the independent exhibitors and to squeeze from the latter the last possible penny in the form of film rental.

"(d) *Blind pricing.* Another device for extracting maximum film rentals from the exhibitors is 'blind pricing.' This involves selling a group of pictures on a contract containing certain percentage and flat rental brackets, reserving to the distributor the right to allocate the pictures to the respective brackets either before or after they are played. Under this practice an exhibitor can not estimate what his pictures are going to cost him when he buys them or even when he plays them. The distributor designates the playdates and the terms, based on the prior success of the pictures, and solely in his own interest.

"The one-sided nature of the device is apparent and its use is another manifestation of the monopolistic power of the defendants. By Question No. 5 Allied asked the exhibitors to indicate whether they thought (a) there should be a provision requiring that prices and allocations be written into the contract or (b) that allocations should be made upon notice of availability, or when the picture is booked, whichever is earlier. The vote:

"(a) In the contract—313 exhibitors, with 998 theatres.

"(b) On availability—46 exhibitors, with 121 theatres.

"A few exhibitors noted that the choice might depend upon which selling system is adopted. Their thought was that if pictures are trade-shown and sold in small groups, allocations definitely should be fixed in the contract. On the other hand, if they are to be sold in full-season blocks, and played long after the contract is signed, then the percentage pictures, if any, should be allocated upon notice of availability.

"The heavy vote cast attests the keen interest of the exhibitors in the matter, as do the many vigorous comments. There is equity in the remark of one exhibitor that 'the distributor and the exhibitor should take the same gamble at the boxoffice.'

"(c) *Threatening loss of run.* Buying in small groups at frequent intervals made possible another form of duress, not only in full line forcing, but also in clubbing exhibitors into submission to whatever terms the distributors demand. This is practiced in competitive situations by threatening to 'sell away' (i.e. to sell the pictures to a competitor on the same or subsequent run) if the exhibitor does not come to

terms. The threat is serious, involving possible loss of the exhibitor's established run of pictures and the prestige and good will appertaining thereto. As one exhibitor expressed it, 'The threat to sell away is a phantom always perched on the distributor's shoulder in making new deals.'

"To the question (No. 3) 'Has the five-picture selling plan had the effect, directly or indirectly, to endanger your established run?' 56 exhibitors, with 336 theatres, answered 'yes.'

"It may be argued that this is merely legitimate competition which it is the purpose of the Sherman Law to create and foster. But it is a strange outcome that a decree designed to restore competition among distributors for the protection of the exhibitors should have as its principal achievement the stimulation of destructive competition among the exhibitors for the enrichment of the distributors. The plain fact is that the distributors in many cases, with a total disregard for old customer relationships, have taken advantage of the opportunity afforded by the five-picture plan to threaten the exhibitors with virtual ruination as a means of extorting high film rentals.

"(f) *Department's responsibility.* In view of what has taken place under the consent decree it can not fairly be argued that the Department's function and responsibility are confined to an insistence that trade practices conform to its concepts of the law. The Department in a legal as well as a moral sense is responsible for the economic consequences of its policies and decrees, and if these have adversely affected innocent parties it owes such parties a duty to correct the condition. The questionnaires show that there is a strong belief among independent exhibitors that the consent decree is responsible for the intolerable conditions that have arisen. Whether that is true in a strict sense may be debatable, but it is undeniable that the decree afforded the opportunity for exploiting the exhibitors and that the distributors gleefully took advantage of it.

"Therefore, we say that in addition to the legal obligation expressly imposed by the statute to insist upon effective measures for restoring competition in the production and distribution of motion pictures, the Department also is morally obligated to rescue the independent exhibitors from the oppression practices by the defendants under cover of the consent decree. The exhibitors must be allowed some bargaining power if they are to survive in an industry which is so completely dominated by the powerful affiliated interests. They must be afforded the right to select the pictures that best suit their needs and to reject or cancel those which are undesirable or which they can not afford. We believe that such a solution can be accomplished under the Sherman Act if only the Department will assume a firm attitude backed by a determination to prosecute the defendants to the limit of the law if proper results are not promptly forthcoming.

"If the Department should nevertheless conclude that the Sherman Act is inadequate to curb the predatory tendencies of these defendants and to restore competitive conditions in the industry, then it should follow the course to which it pledged itself in announcing the filing of the suit (statement dated July 20, 1938), and lay the problem before Congress.

(Continued on last page)

"Gildersleeve on Broadway" with Harold Peary and Billie Burke

(RKO, no release date set; time, 65 min.)

This latest of the "Gildersleeve" program comedies is as inane as the other pictures in the series, and on the same entertainment level; it may please the followers of the radio show, as well as those who found amusement in the previous pictures. Others will certainly find it tiresome. This time "Gildersleeve," the blustering character enacted by Harold Peary, goes to the big city, where he becomes innocently involved with both a "gold-digger" and an eccentric widow. There are the usual farcical situations, most of which are old-fashioned and unfunny. The picture's bright spot is Billie Burke, as the scatter-brained widow:—

Influenced by the spring air, Gildersleeve becomes engaged to Ann Doran, much to the disgust of Freddie Mercer, his young nephew. When Gildersleeve learns that Margaret Landry, his niece, is upset because Michael Road, her New York boy-friend, had not written to her for weeks, he decides to go to the city to investigate. Richard LeGrand, going to New York to attend a druggists' convention, accompanies Gildersleeve. On the train, Gildersleeve meets Billie Burke, an eccentric widow, who owned a big drug supply company, which she planned to close. Because her action would ruin many druggists, LeGrand and his fellows offer Gildersleeve \$5,000 to persuade Billie to keep her company intact. On reaching New York, Gildersleeve sees Claire Carleton, a "gold-digger," eating at the same table with Road, and he concludes that she is enticing the young man away from his niece. To save Road, Gildersleeve makes a date with Claire. He soon finds himself in trouble; Claire, believing him to be a wealthy man, persuades him to buy her a mink coat, and Billie, who had matrimonial designs, pursues him. In the midst of this confusion, Gildersleeve's fiancée arrives. The battle for his affections becomes a three-way affair, with many complications ensuing. Eventually, Gildersleeve discovers that all is well between his niece and Road; he obtains a signed agreement from Billie to keep her drug company in operation; and he manages to rid himself of Claire.

Robert E. Kent wrote the screen play, Herman Schlom produced it, and Gordon Douglas directed it.

"Northern Pursuit" with Errol Flynn, Helmut Dantine and Julie Bishop

(Warner Bros., November 13; time, 93 min.)

A fair topical outdoor melodrama, with a particular appeal for the action fans. Its box-office chances will have to depend on the drawing power of Errol Flynn. The story, which pits the Canadian Mounted Police against Nazi saboteurs, follows a pattern that is familiar to tales of the frozen north. Nevertheless, the action moves at a steady pace and is, at times, exciting, holding one in suspense. It is not a pleasant entertainment, for numerous persons meet death at the hands of the ruthless Nazi leader. Technically, the picture is good—the backgrounds are realistic and the outdoor photography outstanding:—

Landed by submarine on the coast of Hudson's Bay, Nazi Col. Helmut Dantine leads a party of saboteurs for a rendezvous with Gene Lockhart, their contact man. An avalanche buries the saboteurs, and only Dantine escapes. Exhausted and snowblind, he is found by Errol Flynn and John Ridgely, Canadian Mounties, who take him to a cabin. Revealing to Dantine that he is of German descent, Flynn treats the Nazi kindly. He sends Ridgely to headquarters to make a report, promising to follow with Dantine as soon as he gains strength. Inspector Tom Tully, peeved at Flynn's failure to report with Dantine, dispatches patrols to bring both men in. Chagrined, because Tully's action had upset his scheme to gain Dantine's confidence, and furious at Tully's doubt of his loyalty, Flynn resigns. On the day Flynn plans to marry Julie Bishop, Dantine escapes from prison. Tully persuades Flynn to help find the Nazi. Through a pre-arranged plan, Flynn is arrested for making pro-Nazi remarks. He is bailed out by Lockhart, who takes him to Dantine. The Nazi, however, was well aware that Flynn's arrest was a pre-arranged affair, designed to trick him; he planned to use Flynn as a guide, then to get rid of him. To compel Flynn to do his bidding, Dantine lures Julie to the hideout and holds her as hostage. Under this compulsion, Flynn helps the Nazis free four prisoners, and then guides the party northward. En route, Dantine ruthlessly murders Lockhart because of his inability to travel, and kills an Indian guide, who had become frightened. Ridgely, who had been trailing the party, is captured and shot. Flynn, the only one left capable of handling the dog teams, refuses to con-

tinue the journey unless Julie is set free. Dantine agrees. The party reaches an abandoned mine, where they set to work assembling a bomber hidden in the shaft. Dantine reveals that he intends to bomb the Welland Canal. As the bomber prepares to take off, Flynn overpowers his guard, and hides in the plane. Aloft, Flynn manages to kill Dantine and his crew, parachuting to safety before the plane crashes.

Frank Gruber and Alvah Bessie wrote the screen play, Jack Chertok produced it, and Raoul Walsh directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"My Kingdom for a Cook" with Charles Coburn and Marguerite Chapman

(Columbia, August 31; time, 81 min.)

An entertaining comedy. Although the story has little substance and is of program grade, it may do better than average program business, because of the current popularity of Charles Coburn. It is not the type of picture to cause uproarious laughter, but the engaging performances and the comic situations manage to keep one chuckling throughout, and helps take one's mind off the serious problems of the day. Coburn's characterization of a rude, bearded English author is in the Monty Woolley manner, and his actions emulate Woolley's in the "Man Who Came to Dinner." Though Coburn does well with the part, it might have been better had he been cast as his own natural self:—

To help cement Anglo-American relations, Charles Coburn, caustic-witted English author, leaves for the United States, accompanied by Marguerite Chapman, his daughter. They go to the New England town of Colcord, where Coburn rudely brushes aside a welcome arranged by Isobel Elsom, the town cultural leader. Coburn, to whom eating was an important as breathing, finds it difficult to obtain a cook. Learning that Miss Elsom's cook (Almira Sessions) was an expert, Coburn persuades Marguerite to wangle a dinner invitation from Bill Carter, Miss Elsom's son. Coburn repays this kindness by inducing Almira, through subtle flattery, to leave Miss Elsom and work for him. This precipitates a widely-publicized feud between Coburn and Miss Elsom. Carter, to pacify his mother, induces Almira to return. Furious, Coburn determines to verbally chastize Miss Elsom and Americans in general in an address he had been invited to make—prior to the feud—on the 250th anniversary of the town's founding. Marguerite and Carter, knowing that Coburn's remarks would be vitriolic, plan a fake elopement, hoping that he will follow them and miss the speech. Meanwhile Mary Wickes, Miss Elsom's disgruntled secretary, informs Coburn that he might get Almira back by giving her lazy husband (Edward Gargan) an easy job. Searching for Gargan on a farm nearby, Coburn becomes embroiled in a free-for-all that lands him in jail. He manages to get out during the anniversary celebration proceedings. As he walks out on the stage of the auditorium, the audience, in silent protest, starts to leave. Coburn, however, stops them by stating that he had been a fool and that Americans were a wonderful people. He becomes the toast of the nation, and is invited to Washington by the President.

Harold Goldman, Andrew Solt, Joseph Hoffman and Jack Henley wrote the screen play. P. J. Wolfson produced it, and Richard Wallace directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Crazy House" with Olsen and Johnson

(Universal, October 8; time, 80 min.)

Good! Like "Hellzapoppin'," the last picture in which Olsen and Johnson appeared, this, too, is a completely nonsensical comedy that does not pretend to be otherwise. From the moment the film starts until it ends, the action is indicative of the title—"Crazy House." It is slapstick in its broadest form. A woman walking a dog with a wash line attached to its tail is an example of what goes on. In addition to such mad antics, the film offers numerous song and dance numbers by prominent specialty acts, which add much to the entertainment values. It offers also brief appearances by guest stars, among whom are Andy Devine, Leo Carrillo, Robert Paige, Alan Curtis, and Allan Jones, who sings "Donkey Serenade." Cass Daly, a singing comedienne, contributes to the chaos. Martha O'Driscoll and Patric Knowles handle the slight romantic angle. "Crazy House" is the type of comedy that should go over very well in crowded houses:

Arriving in Hollywood to negotiate for the making of a picture, Olsen and Johnson are turned down by Thomas Gomez, studio head, who thinks they are crazy. Patric Knowles, a film-cutter defends them; he is discharged by Gomez. Knowles is hired by the boys to direct their picture. In need of funds, the boys arrange with Percy Kilbride to

finance them. Kilbride, who spoke in terms of millions, did not have a cent. On the strength of Kilbride's fabulous talk, the boys rent space in an independent studio, operated by a syndicate of Hollywood sharpshooters. Total confusion reigns during the shooting of the picture, but despite this chaos the boys finally complete it. It is then that they learn Kilbride's wealth is a myth, and that the creditors cannot be paid. The crooked syndicate serves a restraining order on the boys, in order to gain possession of the negative. Olsen and Johnson take the matter to court, where they convince the judge that they can sell the negative at a profit if given a chance to auction it off to one of the major studios. The court agrees to permit them to preview the picture and to stage an auction. The syndicate, determined to foil the boys' plan, substitutes blank film for five of the seven reels. While Knowles goes in search of the missing reels, the boys entertain the audience by presenting in person the different acts in the picture. This impresses the audience as being a novel way to present a picture. Knowles returns with the missing reels in time to complete the performance. By wiring electricity to a seat occupied by Gomez, the boys trick him into bidding one million dollars for the negative.

Robert Lees and Frederick I. Rinaldo wrote the screen play, Erle C. Kenton produced it, and Edward F. Cline directed it. The cast includes Edgar Kennedy, Robert Emmet Keane, Franklin Pangborn, Hans Conried, Shemp Howard, Lon Chaney, the De Marcos, Marion Hutton and the Glenn Miller Singers, Chandra Kaly Dancers, Delta Rhythm Boys, Count Basie's Orchestra, Leighton Noble's Orchestra, and others. Morally suitable for all.

"Mystery Broadcast" with Ruth Terry and Frank Albertson

(Republic, November 23; time, 63 min.)

Passable entertainment for the followers of murder mystery melodramas, suitable for the lower half of a mid-week double-bill. The plot is quite complicated, but it holds one's attention to a fair degree, since it is not until the end that the mystery is solved. It contains the usual eerie effects used in thrillers—peculiar noises, shadows, mysterious acts on the part of several of the characters, and the sudden opening of doors and windows. Some comedy and an unimportant romance round out the plot. The performances are adequate:

Ruth Terry, writer of a weekly radio dramatization of unsolved crimes, becomes peeved when she reads in Addison Richards' radio column that Frank Albertson, her competitor on another network, had a superior program. Ruth announces that on her next broadcast she will not only dramatize the murder of a famous actress, but will also solve it. Paul Harvey, Ruth's sponsor, is pleased with the idea, despite the opposition of his wife (Wynne Gibson), who wanted Ruth's contract cancelled, so that Nils Asther, a pianist, may replace her. While at a cafe, where Ruth meets Albertson and Richards, she receives a telephone call from Alice Fleming, character actress on her program, who begs off from playing the role of the dead actress. Ruth and Albertson go to Alice's apartment and find her murdered. Believing the same person killed both Alice and the actress, Ruth and Albertson go to a newspaper morgue, where they learn that the dead actress had been married to an unknown man; also that Alice and a mysterious woman were present at the time of the actress' death, but they had been absolved of any part in the crime. Ruth receives an anonymous message warning her to drop the broadcast. This strengthens her determination to see it through. She visits the mountain lodge where the murder had taken place, and there is confronted by Wynne, who reveals herself as the mysterious woman who had been present at the murder. As Wynne speaks, she is shot dead by a mysterious stranger, who flees. Following up a number of clues, Ruth finally learns that Richards was the dead actress' missing husband. She cleverly tricks him into admitting the murders during her broadcast.

Dane Lussier wrote the screen play, and George Sherman produced and directed it. Morally suitable for all.

"Find the Blackmailer" with Jerome Cowan, Faye Emerson and Gene Lockhart

(Warner Bros., November 11; time, 55 min.)

For those who like their murder mystery melodramas with the accent on comedy, this should prove acceptable program fare. The story itself is trite and far-fetched, and there is little human interest since the characters do nothing to arouse one's sympathy. The action, however, is breezy, and some of the dialogue is bright. Jerome Cowan, as the private detective who solves the mystery, gives a satisfactory performance. The production values are very modest:—

Gene Lockhart, a candidate for Mayor, employs Jerome Cowan, a private detective, to locate and capture a talking blackbird owned by an ex-convict, who had taught the bird to say, "Don't kill me, Lockhart." Lockhart explains that the ex-convict feared death at the hands of Bradley Page, a gambler, whom he had cheated out of \$30,000. He now demanded \$60,000 from Lockhart, so that he could repay Page and still have enough left over to carry on an affair with Faye Emerson, a chorus girl. Lockhart feared that the bird would incriminate him if the ex-convict should be murdered. Cowan visits the ex-convict's apartment, where he finds the man murdered; also, he finds John Harmon, a henchman, knocked unconscious, the blackbird missing, and a safe blown open. As Cowan revives Harmon, Page arrives. After accusing one another of the crime, the three men agree that some unknown person was responsible. Cowan, after notifying the police, visits Faye at her apartment, where he meets Robert Kent, her attorney. Their lack of knowledge about the murder and the blackbird's disappearance does not convince Cowan. Other events lead the police to believe that Cowan, Lockhart, and Harmon were guilty of the crime. The three men hide in a cheap hotel. There, Cowan gets Lockhart to tell him of his movements before and after the crime, and he comes to the conclusion that Faye and Kent were the guilty persons. Sending Harmon for the police, Cowan and Lockhart go to Faye's apartment, where they find the bird hidden in a portable radio. The police arrive and, Cowan, explaining his deductions, accuses the pair of the murder. Cowan is in turn accused by Kent. To the surprise of all, the bird blames Kent. Later, Harmon reveals that the bird could not speak. Being a ventriloquist, he had made it appear as if the bird spoke.

Robert E. Kent wrote the screen play, and D. Ross Lederman directed it. Adult entertainment.

"In Old Oklahoma" with John Wayne, Martha Scott and Albert Dekker

(Republic, no release date set; time, 102 min.)

Fairly good. From a production point of view, it is one of Republic's most ambitious offerings, and it belongs in the super-class of outdoor spectacles. It should undoubtedly thrill the western fans, for it has hard and fast riding, hectic fist fights, and a few gun-shooting sequences; also, it has romance, comedy, and some music. The story, however, follows a familiar pattern, with the result that at times it becomes a bit tedious, because one foresees the plot developments. The most exciting action is towards the finish, where a caravan of old-fashioned wagon-tanks makes a mad dash to Tulsa to fulfill a contract requirement. The action takes place in the Oklahoma oil fields, during 1906:—

Condemned for having written a "daring" novel, Martha Scott leaves the small town in which she taught school. On the train, Martha, who was actually naive and unworldly, meets Albert Dekker, an unscrupulous, wealthy oil operator, and John Wayne, a lone cowboy and former Rough Rider. Dekker, promising Martha a good time, induces her to stop with him at Sepulpa. Wayne, too, gets off the train. Although instinctively antagonistic towards Wayne, because of his interest in Martha, Dekker hires him as a bodyguard when the cowboy saves him from being shot by a man he had swindled. The two break relations when Wayne advises a group of Indians not to lease their land to Dekker. Grateful, the Indians offer the lease to Wayne. The cowboy declines. The townspeople, many of whom had been cheated by Dekker, prevail upon Wayne to accept the lease, offering to help finance the oil operations. Meanwhile Martha realizes that Dekker was not the marrying kind, and she becomes more receptive to Wayne. Because the Indians are Government wards, Dekker appeals to President Theodore Roosevelt (Sidney Blackmer), claiming that Wayne's inexperience will result in no profit for the Indians. The President, recalling Wayne's record with the Rough Riders, assigns the lease to the cowboy, with a provision that Dekker take over if he fails to deliver oil to a Tulsa refinery on a specified date. Dekker and his henchmen do their utmost to interfere with Wayne's operations, but he finally succeeds in bringing in the first well. To prevent Wayne from delivering the oil to Tulsa, Dekker buys the pipeline. Wayne and his men rig up old-fashioned wagon tanks and, despite Dekker's efforts to sabotage the caravan, brings the oil to Tulsa in time to meet the deadline.

Ethel Hill and Eleanor Griffin wrote the screen play, Robert North produced it, and Albert S. Rogell directed it. The cast includes Marjorie Rambeau, "Gabby" Hayes, Dale Evans, Byron Foulger, Grant Withers and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"V. *Affiliated theatres still a problem.* The utterly cynical attitude of the defendants towards Section XI has been established by the number of theatres built and acquired and the worthlessness of the section has been demonstrated by the decision of Judge Goddard dismissing the Government's application to make certain defendants disgorge their post-decree acquisitions. Answers to Question No. 11 of the questionnaire show that the acquired theatres at once succeed to the priorities and preferences invariably accorded to affiliated theatres. The notation of a Michigan exhibitor sums up the story: 'Mel Theatre was acquired by United Theatres (Paramount) and priorities that go with an affiliated theatre were at once evident.'

"It is reported from another State that Paramount has bought a lot adjacent to an independent theatre and the exhibitor is faced with affiliated competition just as soon as WPB relaxes its control of building materials.

"With the tremendous reserves which the defendants are building up as a result of their wartime profiteering, they are poised for another gigantic campaign of theatre acquisition and construction and unless Section XI is entirely rewritten and made effective they will accomplish their monopolistic purpose under the very wording of the decree.

"Meanwhile, the defendants are extending their monopoly by other means. The creation of additional first-runs by means of moveovers has been mentioned. The answers to the questions dealing with discriminatory clearance (No. 8), discrimination in supplying prints (No. 9) and double-feraturing 'A' pictures (No. 20) show the continuing purpose of the defendants to grant special favors to the affiliated theatres and to use those theatres in softening the independent exhibitors for the kill.

"But most important of all is the processing of the independent theatres by forced percentage playing so as to exert a degree of control almost as great as if they owned and operated such theatres. The Department's attention already has been called to this by a resolution of the Allied board of directors dated August 12. Comments of the exhibitors quoted in the summaries show that not only do the distributors determine admission prices and playdates on percentage engagements, but they dictate the amount and kind of advertising the theatres shall use; and not only do they place checkers in the theatres during the run of percentage pictures but they require that the books and records of the independent exhibitors shall be subject to inspection and audit for an indefinite period of time.

"Thus in spite of the consent decree the monopoly marches on and the exhibitors, are being transformed from independent business men into mere agents of the distributors, with little or no voice in the operating policies of their theatres and compensated by a bare commission based on the receipts of their own boxoffices.

"VI. *Arbitration.* Only 22 of the reporting exhibitors, operating a total of 81 theatres, had filed arbitration proceedings under the decree. Most of these—15—reported that they had received no, or every inadequate, relief. The returns, therefore, represented little in the way of actual experience under the arbitration system. A larger number reported that they had observed the operation of the system and assigned reasons for not having invoked it. The similarity of the comments from different parts of the country shows that distrust of the system is widespread and that its defects are fundamental. The five principal criticisms are:

"(a) Expense incident to the conduct of proceedings. The exhibitors do not dwell so much on the taxable fees and costs as on attorney's fees which distributors have made necessary.

"(b) Unfair tactics employed by attorneys for distributors and affiliated theatres. Each distributor has been separately represented and these 'batteries of lawyers' have bulldozed exhibitors and unduly influenced arbitrators, besides resorting to all manner of technicalities.

"(c) Lack of available legal talent to combat the experienced and trade-wise attorneys regularly employed by the distributors.

"(d) Delay resulting from the distributors' tactics, the prescribed procedure and appeals. The system can only be invoked in proceedings involving clearance and run which look to permanent relief. It is useless in proceedings involving a particular group of pictures since they would pass availability before a final award could be made.

"(e) A feeling (more prevalent in some territories than others) that the panels and especially the Appeal Board are composed of persons of an ultra-conservative, pro-distributor point of view. Except in Eastern Pennsylvania this applies more to the Appeal Board than to the local arbitrators.

"It has been evident for some time that the Appeal Board stands low in the estimation of the exhibitors. Question No. 14 contained three suggested reforms and asked the exhibitors to express a preference in regard thereto. But little interest was shown in the subject, this apathy being attributable in part to a feeling of futility as shown by the remarks on the system in general and in part to lack of familiarity with the work of the Board. The proposals and the returns are as follows:

"(a) The Board should be abolished and the awards of the local distributors made final—44 exhibitors, with 128 theatres.

"(b) The Board should be replaced by local appeal boards composed of qualified arbitrators chosen from the panels—89 exhibitors, with 234 theatres.

"(c) The Appeal Board should be retained but there should be a change in personnel so that all will not reside in New York—34 exhibitors, with 90 theatres.

"VII. *Conclusion.* In its statement announcing the signing of the consent decree (dated October 29, 1940) the Department said that 'Properly administered it should put an end to disputes between distributors and exhibitors . . . and should result in placing the industry on a fair competitive basis.' And the Department added:

"If these results are not obtained after a reasonable trial period, there will be no alternative for the Government but to proceed with the litigation and press for a revision of the entire industry structure in accordance with the prayer of the petition.'

"On January 22, 1943 the Department made public a preliminary report of the special unit of the Antitrust Division charged with the supervision of the motion picture consent decree. After commenting that the decree had supplied 'some relief to a substantial number of exhibitors from certain unfair trade practices,' the Department said—

"It has not yet demonstrated that film licensing discriminations inherent in the ownership of theatres by distributors may be effectively remedied by measures short of divorcement.'

"In view of the conditions revealed by the survey which this Association has made, we think the conclusion now is inescapable that the consent decree has not, and by reason of its ineffective provisions can not, achieve the objects and purposes of the Department as set forth in the original petition and its numerous public statements. The unhappy truth is that the motion picture monopoly is more powerful and in general its practices are more oppressive today than when the consent decree was entered. The three-year test period afforded the defendants ample time in which to put their house in order, but this they have utterly failed to do. We respectfully urge that the Department now insist upon sterner measures better calculated to curb the trust and to insure fair competitive conditions.

"In closing let us add that based on our understanding at the conference on August 9 exhibitors were told that the information forwarded by them on the questionnaires would be kept in strict confidence. The names of the reporting exhibitors have been omitted from the summaries. However, in a few cases it might be possible to identify the exhibitors by their comments or the nature of their grievances. In order fully to protect these exhibitors against retaliation, neither the questionnaires nor the summaries should be exposed to distributor representatives."

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Vol. XXV

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 30, 1943

No. 44

HERE AND THERE

RECENT STATEMENTS made by Tom Clark, Assistant Attorney General in charge of the Government's anti-trust suit against the five major companies, seem to have knocked the conjectures of the producer propagandists into a cocked hat.

As pointed out in our October 9 issue, different trade papers, through the expediency of such terms as, "it is reported," or "it is learned from well-informed circles," have indicated that the varied comments of exhibitors regarding their experiences under the Consent Decree, and their many proposals for changes in the Decree, have had a tendency to confuse the Department of Justice rather than to serve as a medium of clarification.

That the exhibitors' comments and proposals have far from confused Tom Clark can be gleaned from his recent statements made to a *Motion Picture Daily* reporter, in which he warned that "the new decree, if any, will be unanimous—there must be more protection for the smaller exhibitors or we will go to court. And a new decree must prevent the wide expansion of producers into the exhibition field."

According to Clark, a new decree, to be acceptable to the government, will have to include stronger arbitration provisions; alteration of the blocks-of-five selling system; and the regulation of distributor-producer owned theatres and affiliated circuits, so that they will be subject to the same clearances and buying terms imposed on the independents.

Clark pointed out that "under the present Consent Decree, a theatre cannot obtain the benefits of arbitration unless he owned his theatre before June 1940. That's bad. It helps to prevent competition and keeps independent operators out of the industry. The freezing provision of the present decree will not be a feature of any new decree."

Regarding clearance, Clark stated: "The producer-distributor-exhibitor owner of films is not subject to clearance provisions now and feels that he can release a film and exhibit it whenever he feels like doing so, although his smaller competitor across the street must, under clearance provisions, await his turn to show the same film. That's not right and we hope to obtain the objective of having everybody subject to the same clearance provisions—ultimately."

Clark's remarks certainly do not seem to be those of a man who is confused. If anything, they denote that he has given careful consideration to the many exhibitor complaints and proposals, and that he has very definite ideas as to what the major companies must do to meet the inadequacies of the Decree.

Last April, in an address before the American Business Congress, Clark, who at that time was chief of the Department of Justice's Anti-trust Division (he has recently been made chief of the Criminal Division), declared that "American business has nothing to fear so long as it plays the game fairly and according to the rules." He added that there would be "no witch-hunting, no uprooting of American customs or traditions, but there will be practical, swift, hard-hitting law enforcement."

If one is to judge Clark by his handling of the anti-trust case thus far, and his remarks as to what will be acceptable in the way of a new decree, if any, it is obvious that he is a man who means what he says.

* * *

IN A STATEMENT ISSUED on October 23, Abram F. Myers, National Allied's General Counsel, points out that, when Congressional tax hearings are being held, it almost always happens, by "accident or design," that the Treasury Department releases for publication the salaries and other compensation paid by motion picture companies to stars and executives.

Stating that he had anticipated a "recurrence of this phenomenon," Myers goes on to say that, in opposing the proposed 200% increase in the admission tax, he told the House Ways and Means Committee that "while the whole motion picture industry had been branded with the dollar mark, a distinction should be drawn between the affiliated interests and the independent exhibitors."

Myers' premonition was apparently well-grounded, for, as he points out, on the day following his appearance before the committee, the Treasury Department released for publication a list of those individuals who, during the calendar year 1941 or during fiscal years ending in 1942, received from corporations, for personal services, compensation in excess of \$75,000.

Following, in part, is what Myers had to say about this list:

"In this select company were 922 individuals, of whom 222—almost 25%—were in the motion picture business. The combined salaries and bonuses of the movie executives, writers and stars represents a much greater percentage of the aggregate of all compensations listed, since the average compensation paid in the movie business is much higher than in other industries.

"The total compensation paid those listed as belonging to the motion picture business was \$31,386,962, or an average of \$142,000."

Myers then cites figures showing that, "of the 222 movie folks on the list, only 67 can be identified as

(Continued on last page)

"The Dancing Masters" with Laurel and Hardy

(20th Century-Fox, November 19; time, 63 min.)

Fair program entertainment. Like most Laurel and Hardy comedies, this, too, has an inane story, and it depends for its laughs on a series of slapstick situations, some of which are funny and others that are not. Children, as well as the comedy team's avid followers, should find it amusing. The most comical sequences are those in which the comedians, dressed in ballet costumes, teach young ladies how to dance. Another comical sequence, though old-fashioned, is where they find themselves atop a driverless omnibus that careens madly through the streets, weaving in and out of traffic, until it crashes through the gates of an amusement park and rolls onto a roller coaster on which it dashes up and down the steep inclines.

What there is of the disconnected story deals with their financial difficulties as the result of operating an unprofitable dancing school. The boys add to their troubles when Trudy Marshall, one of their dancing students, asks them to help Robert Bailey, a young inventor, sell his new invention—a flame thrower—to Matt Briggs, her father and wealthy manufacturer, who heartily disapproved of Bailey, because of his interest in Trudy. Posing as the inventors, the boys demonstrate the machine to Briggs. The machine gets out of control and burns down Briggs home before the boys can demolish it. Learning that Bailey requires \$10,000 to rebuild his invention, Hardy tries various methods of getting Laurel injured, so that they can collect the money from an insurance company. After a series of other incidents, Hardy and not Laurel lands in the hospital.

W. Scott Darling wrote the screen play, Lee Marcus produced it, and Mal St. Clair directed it. The cast includes Margaret Dumont, Allan Lane and other.

Morally suitable for all.

"Isle of Forgotten Sins" with John Carradine, Sidney Toler and Gale Sondergaard

(PRC, August 15; time, 82 min.)

A fair program action melodrama with a South Seas background, but it is not an edifying entertainment. The atmosphere of the picture is rather sordid, and there are unpleasant occurrences throughout. Not one of the characters does anything decent; they are shown as four-flushers and conscienceless. The story is trite, and it is never quite convincing. It is due more to the good acting than to the story itself that one's interest is held. The action moves at a steady pace, and some of the situations are exciting. The production values are fairly good:—

In a notorious South Sea island gambling house, operated by Gale Sondergaard, John Carradine and Frank Fenton, deep-sea divers, recognize Sidney Toler as the captain of a trading ship that had disappeared mysteriously with three million dollars in gold aboard. With Toler was Rick Vallin, purser of the missing ship. Surmising that Toler and Vallin had scuttled the boat and had salvaged the gold, Carradine and Fenton lay plans to visit the pair's island home in search of the treasure. As the two men stock their ship and prepare to set sail, one of Gale's girl-entertainers shoots a drunken sailor. Everyone in the gambling house is put under technical arrest. Gale, however, gets her girls out through a secret door, and all take refuge aboard Carradine's boat. Carradine offers them

a share of the gold in return for their help in covering up his real purpose. When Carradine and his party arrive on Toler's island, Toler suspects their motive. He permits the two deep-sea divers to find the sunken vessel's log book, which contained information showing where the ship had been scuttled. Toler planned to let the two men salvage the gold, and then to take it away from them. Leaving Gale and the girls with Toler, the two men leave the island on a pretense, unaware that one of Toler's native boys followed them. They succeed in retrieving the gold, but Toler and Vallin, together with their native boys, board the ship, tie them up, and depart with the treasure. Returning to the island, Vallin and Toler shoot each other in a quarrel over the loot. Carradine and Fenton manage to free themselves, and they return to the island in the midst of a furious storm. A great tidal wave wrecks the cabin and all are washed into the sea. The gold is lost, but Carradine, Fenton, and Gale manage to live through the storm.

Raymond L. Schrock wrote the screen play, Peter R. Van Duinen produced it, and Edgar R. Ulmer directed it. The cast includes Veda Ann Borg, Rita Quigley and others.

Not for children.

"Harvest Melody" with Rosemary Lane, Sheldon Leonard and Johnny Downs

(PRC, November 22; time, 70 min.)

Pleasant program fare. In its intended market, this comedy with music should easily satisfy as a supporting feature. What there is of the story, which deals with the back to the farm movement, is timely, but it is of no particular significance, since it merely serves as a framework for the numerous musical numbers. In addition to her singing pleasantly, Rosemary Lane performs well. Among those doing specialty numbers are the Radio Rogues and The Vigilantes, whose popularity may help at the box-office. Eddie LeBaron and his Orchestra furnish the music, which is of the popular variety; it should please the younger set:—

As a publicity stunt in behalf of numerous Hollywood stars represented by him, Sheldon Leonard, a press agent, conceives the idea of having them join a "back to the farm movement" by helping to harvest crops on a farm owned by Johnny Downs. The stars approve the idea and, headed by Rosemary Lane, a fading leading lady, whose studio had refused to renew her contract, start out for the farm. Downs, impressed by Rosemary's beauty, falls in love with her, causing much anguish to Marjorie Manners, his sweetheart. Taking notice of Downs' infatuation, Leonard arranges with Rosemary to return the young man's love. Eventually, Sheldon induces Downs to propose marriage. Sheldon capitalizes on the affair by gaining wide publicity about the film star's romance with a farmer boy. Marjorie, downhearted, leaves the farm. Sheldon's stunt reacts, however, when Rosemary is elected head of a nationwide "back to the farm" movement, and the Government enlists her support for the duration. Realizing that helping her country was far more important than her career, Rosemary refuses to sign a contract with her former studio, and sees to it that Downs and Marjorie are reconciled.

Allan Gale wrote the screen play, Walter Colmes produced it, and Sam Newfield directed it. The cast includes Charlotte Wynters, Luis Alberni and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Guadalcanal Diary" with Preston Foster,
William Bendix and Lloyd Nolan**

(20th Century-Fox, November 5; time, 93 min.)

Excellent! Based on Richard Tregaskis' best-selling book of the same title, this war drama is a stirring factual-like account of the Marines' invasion of Guadalcanal, their struggle to hold on to their foothold, despite the lack of air support, reinforcements, and supplies, and their ultimate success in eliminating the Japanese from the island. The producers rate a salute for having treated their subject with the honesty and dignity it deserves. The action, which depicts warfare in all its savagery, at no time resorts to "phoney superman heroics," the sort that makes many a war film the object of derision. The story is told in a straightforward manner, and the Marines are shown as courageous in some situations, and honestly scared in others. The Japanese soldiers are depicted as tricky and barbaric individuals, whose ruthlessness know no bounds, but their ability as a military force is at no time belittled. Despite the film's grimness and documentary quality, it holds one's interest tightly, and is consistently entertaining. Considerable pathos and much comedy have been injected into the proceedings without in any way detracting from the seriousness of the theme. The all-male cast has as its principals William Bendix, as a former Brooklyn taxicab driver; Lloyd Nolan, as a tough, but genial, top sergeant; Robert Preston, as an amicable Catholic Chaplain; and Richard Jaekel, a newcomer, as an under-age Marine over whom the others watch—all give memorable performances, with that of Bendix's outstanding. The direction and the photography are very good. In spite of the fact that it is a war picture, it should do well at the box-office, because it is an outstanding effort.

The story opens on a Sunday afternoon, with a peaceful scene aboard a transport carrying a Marine task force to an undisclosed destination. On the following morning the transport is met by a force of American destroyers and cruisers, and the Marines learn that they are to attack the Japanese strongholds on Guadalcanal and Tulagi in the Solomon Islands. Under cover of the Navy's guns, the Marines storm Guadalcanal and capture Henderson Field without meeting opposition, although it was evident that the Japanese had departed in a hurry. Before long the men find themselves shot at by Japanese snipers. The Marines consolidate their gains and, for weeks, fight off the attacks of the numerically superior Japanese, undergoing extreme hardships because of their lack of air support and supplies. Reinforcements and materials finally arrive, and the Marines set out on a campaign to eliminate the enemy from the island. The Japanese prove to be formidable opponents, fighting until they die. Eventually, the enemy is driven out of the hills and into the sea, giving the Marines complete possession of Guadalcanal. Tired after four months of bitter fighting, the Marines leave for a well-earned rest when the Army takes over the island.

Lamar Trotti wrote the screen play, Bryan Foy produced it, and Lewis Seiler directed it. Islin Auster was the associate producer. The cast includes Richard Conte, Roy Roberts, Minor Watson, Ralph Byrd, Lionel Stander, John Archer, Eddie Acuff, Miles Mander, Warren Ashe and many others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"The Iron Major" with Pat O'Brien
and Ruth Warwick**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 85 min.)

Deeply appealing. Biographical of the life of Major Frank Cavanaugh, one of the country's most famed football coaches, "The Iron Major" emerges as a heartwarming drama, the sort that should please all types of audiences. The story is simple but touchingly human. In episodic fashion, it traces Cavanaugh's life as a schoolboy, as a college student, and as a famed coach. The scenes depicting his romance before his marriage, and those showing his family life, particularly with his children, are both tender and humorous. Cavanaugh's devotion to his family, his Irish sense of humor, and his stern belief in clean living and fairness, makes of him an inspiring character, one that should impress the youth of the nation. The football sequences give the film added value at this time of the year. Pat O'Brien, as Cavanaugh, and Ruth Warwick, as his ever-loving wife, are excellent. The supporting cast, too, is effective. "The Iron Major" is a wholesome entertainment. It is also a credit to the motion picture industry:—

Having had a passion for football all through his schoolboy days, Frank Cavanaugh (Pat O'Brien) enters Dartmouth and wins a place on the football team. He earns his own way, but he is compelled to quit college to help support his family, because of his father's death. He secures a position as football coach at the University of Cincinnati, but, on meeting Florence Ayars (Ruth Warwick), he decides to give up football to become a lawyer. His sincerity wins Florence, and they are married. When Cavanaugh loses his first law case, Florence encourages him to make football his life work. He becomes a famous coach at Holy Cross, and this wins him an offer to coach at Dartmouth. Under Cavanaugh's tutelage, the Dartmouth teams become famous. With the coming of World War I, Cavanaugh, feeling that his boys might be disappointed if he didn't show that he was a fighter himself, enlists as a private, although he was forty-one years old and had six small children. In France, he is made a major for gallantry under fire, but his wounds compel him to return to America for hospitalization. Recovered from his illness, Cavanaugh resumes coaching at little Boston College, even though the salary is low. His wounds, however, had taken their toll of his husky body, and he learns from the doctors that he has but five years to live. In order that he leave Florence and the children financially secure, Cavanaugh signs a contract with Fordham, a richer and larger university, and soon leads its teams to nation-wide fame on the gridiron. Fordham's brilliant victory over Oregon State in 1932 brings Cavanaugh's football career to a close. Partially blind, he has to be led from the field by Florence. A few months later, surrounded by his family and close friends, Cavanaugh dies.

Aben Kandel and Warren Duff wrote the screen play, Robert Fellows produced it, and Ray Enright directed it. The cast includes Robert Ryan, Leon Ames, Russell Wade and others.

Morally suitable for all.

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actors, and this involves considerable duplication as some are listed under more than one company." He points out that the list does not include the earnings of the actors from rival forms of entertainment, such as radio.

The following, in condensed form, are Myers' statistics on salaries and other compensation paid out by the different companies to persons earning in excess of \$75,000:

Loew's, Inc.: Seventy-six persons were paid a total of \$12,379,341. Louis B. Mayer heads the list with a salary of \$157,500 and commissions of \$792,265, making a total of \$949,165, which is by far the highest salary paid to any person in the country; also, it represents an increase of \$245,340 more than he received in 1940, and it is the fifth straight year in which he has led the country. Among the other high-salaried Loew men were Nicholas M. Schenck, \$425,366; E. J. Mannix, \$324,130; Sam Katz, \$321,505; J. Robert Rubin, \$269,836; Al Lichtman, \$280,503; and William F. Rodgers, \$106,000.

Paramount: Twenty-seven persons were paid a total of \$3,896,155. Myers points out that Paramount's listing is obviously incomplete, since it does not include such home office executives as Barney Balaban, Austin Keough and Neil Agnew. Adolph Zukor is shown to have received \$121,280.

Twentieth Century-Fox: Thirty-three persons were paid a total of \$4,221,678. Myers points out that, its report being for the calendar year 1941, this company had not yet "struck its stride." Darryl Zanuck headed the list with \$260,275.

Warner Bros.: Thirty-seven persons were paid a total of \$4,712,021. The list includes, among others, Jack Warner, \$182,000; H. A. Warner, \$177,500; Albert Warner, \$104,000; Bette Davis, \$252,333; Errol Flynn, \$240,000; and Charles Einfeld, \$125,000.

RKO: Twelve persons were paid a total of \$1,221,336. Here, too, Myers points out that the report is for the calendar year 1941, at a time when the company was not doing so well. The year 1942, as well as the current year, will undoubtedly change the picture.

Universal: Twelve persons were paid a total of \$2,125,891. Here Myers gives credit for Universal's rise to Abbott and Costello, who earned for themselves a salary of \$224,458 and "other compensation" of \$363,964, making a total of \$588,423. N. J. Blumberg received \$169,948, and J. Cheever Chowdin earned \$181,898.

Columbia: Fifteen persons were paid a total of \$1,520,923. "The Columbia report," says Myers, "is for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1942. Even then the executives were enjoying the fruits of their policy of promising much and delivering little. . . . Bro. Harry Cohn knocked off \$145,600 while Bro. Jack (who does not live up to his name) had to be content with \$88,400. We hardly recognized the gentleman with the dignified monicker of Abraham Montague, who drew down only \$78,566. But he should not be downhearted, this year's earnings should reflect his outstanding salesmanship in selling the same eight pictures to the exhibitors twice."

Myers brings his statistics to a close by pointing out that "only five beneficiaries of cushy salaries can be identified as connected with the exhibition end of

the business, and they, all of them, are employed by companies affiliated with producers of motion pictures. The Marcus Loew Booking Agency has three up and coming lads, L. Friedman (\$84,800), C. C. Moscovitz (\$106,000), and J. R. Vogel (\$79,500)—but still below the average. Fox West Coast Agency Corporation paid Charles P. Skouras \$130,000 and National Theatres Amusement Company paid C. P. Skouras and S. P. Skouras a total of \$375,390.

"Those who criticize the top-heavy salaries and bonuses prevailing in the major companies," concludes Myers, "are usually dismissed as carping, envious, or destructive. But the burden of these salaries is becoming unbearable. To support the load, the exhibitors are being mulcted of their rightful profits by ever-increasing demands for higher film rentals, for percentage engagements, for preferred playing time. Every season the major companies increase their demands and devise new methods for draining off the profits of the independent theatres. The trend must be halted, not only to protect the independent exhibitors, but to save the producers from themselves.

"The newspapers report that the Ways and Means Committee, in its search for additional revenue, is looking to the excess earnings of corporations that are profiting from wartime prosperity although not directly engaged in the war effort. It would almost seem that this announcement stems from the Treasury's salary list. If so, the greedy ones have only themselves to blame. The pity of it is that the publication of the list may expose the innocent exhibitors and theatre-goers to unfair and unreasonable taxation, unless a sharp line can be drawn between the producer-distributors and the independent exhibitors."

* * *

FURTHER EVIDENCE of the Department of Justice's determination to prevent the expansion of theatre holdings by the producer-distributors is its refusal to grant permission to Loew's, Inc., for the acquisition of a circuit of forty-four eastern theatres owned by Walter Reade, who, because of illness, has decided to retire.

The Schine Circuit, too, which sought permission to buy Reade's holdings, was denied permission by the Department.

* * *

EXHIBITOR RESENTMENT against Columbia continues to rise. Exhibitor organizations throughout the country have passed resolutions condemning it for withholding eight choice 1942-43 pictures from the contract-holders, and for offering them as a part of the 1943-44 season's program.

Numerous exhibitors have written to this office asking what can be done to compel Columbia to deliver the withheld pictures. Nothing can be done through the courts; but something can be and should be done through the Columbia salesman. Every exhibitor can do something for himself, and, at the same time, for his fellow exhibitors. For years this company has flagrantly disregarded the rights of its customers, and has consistently withheld choice pictures from one season to offer them as bait for the following season. If each of you should resolve not to sign a deal with Columbia unless its promises are put into the contract, the question, "What can be done?" will never come up again.

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No. 45

DO YOUR PART ON THE TAX ISSUE

It seems as if the unified protests against the proposed 200% increase in admission taxes made by the different national and regional exhibitor organization heads, as well as the many protests made by the individual exhibitors themselves, have taken effect.

At this writing, the House Ways and Means Committee, which is presently considering new forms of taxation, has voted to reduce its previously recommended 30% tax on general admissions to 20%, thus doubling, instead of trebling, the tax that is now in effect.

A 20% admission tax is admittedly more equitable than a 30% tax and, though it will be necessary to increase admission prices, some exhibitors seem to be of the opinion that it is within reason; they feel that the public, in these times, is geared for an increase in taxes, and that it will accept a higher admission price with good grace.

Many other exhibitors, however, feel that the increase will serve to decrease theatre attendance markedly, particularly in localities that are not sharing in the financial benefits of the war boom, as well as in theatres that cater to patrons whose limited earnings do not permit them to go beyond the fifteen to thirty-five cents price range for their entertainment.

This paper cannot stress too strongly the incalculable damage that may be done to the exhibitors as a whole if those who believe that a 20% tax is equitable should cease their opposition to the increase. Nor can we stress too strongly the harm that will be done if the exhibitors should appear to be divided in their opinions as to what constitutes an equitable tax. To those of you who are satisfied with a 20% tax a word of caution is necessary, lest you be lulled into a feeling of security: the battle is not yet won.

The proposed 20% tax is now in its tentative stage and, before it is adopted finally by Congress, much can happen to change the rate. Adoption of the tax by the House Ways and Means Committee is but the first step. From there, the tax bill is submitted to the House of Representatives, where it is subject to amendment before approval. It will then be sent to the Senate Finance Committee for study and possible revision, and thence to the Senate itself. There, too, the tax bill will be subject to amendment before approval. By the time the Senate gets through with it, the bill will in some way probably be different from the original form in which it was approved by the House of Representatives. It will, therefore, go to a joint Congressional committee, which will iron out the differences before returning it to both the Senate and the House for a final vote. Thus, before the general admission tax rate is finally agreed upon, there is always the possibility that it will emerge either at a

higher or lower rate than was originally recommended by the House Ways and Means Committee.

The final tax rate depends on what you are going to do about it. To prevent the imposition of a discriminatory tax, you should write to your Congressmen (Senators and Representatives), letting them know how adversely it will affect your operations. The fact that your organization heads and other industry spokesmen have done a fine job in presenting your case to the House Ways and Means Committee should not serve as an excuse for you to sit back in a self-satisfied manner, for you cannot tell what hidden forces may be working against you.

Each industry faced with new taxation is represented in Washington by pressure groups that are doing their utmost to either escape taxation, or to get the lightest taxation possible. When one of these groups succeeds in convincing the legislators to minimize the tax burden on the industry it represents, the legislators, to make up the revenue required by the Government, increase the taxes on other industries. Woe be to the industries that fail to make their feelings and their problems known to the legislators; they usually end up with the heaviest taxes.

None of you—producer, distributor and exhibitor alike, can afford to look upon the proposed admission tax with indifference. Unless you make it a point to contact your Congressmen and state your case, you may get the surprise of your life when the tax bill is made the law of the land. And you will have no one to blame but yourself.

TOM CLARK REJECTS THE MAJORS' DECREE PROPOSALS

After rejecting the proposals submitted to him last Tuesday by Joseph Hazen, Warner Brothers' counsel representing the consent decree signers, Assistant U. S. Attorney-General Tom C. Clark is quoted by Film Daily as saying: "We're so far apart now that unless they come across with a good deal more we might just as well go ahead with the case in New York, or bring another one elsewhere.

"Hazen said they've gone as far as they could . . . but I can't help thinking that they're just horsing along."

Clark, who did not make public the contents of the proposals, said that the majors had made a minimum offer as a basis for trading. He made it clear, however, that there will be no trading, and that his department will lose no time in reopening the anti-trust case if the majors do not better their proposals before the decree expires Nov. 20.

The major companies should quit "horsing along"; Clark means business.

"Government Girl" with Olivia de Havilland and Sonny Tufts

(RKO, no release date set, time, 93 min.)

Fairly good entertainment. War-time Washington serves as the background for this comedy-drama, which treats of the Capitol's political and social intrigues, its red tape and bureaucracy, and its crowded living conditions. The story is on the synthetic side, and at times the action slows down considerably, but it manages to hold one's interest. The sparkling dialogue and comical situations are good for many laughs. The closing sequences, where Miss de Havilland bursts into a Senate Committee hearing to help Sonny Tufts, her employer, are dramatic. For the most part, however, the film is a light entertainment. The romantic interest is pleasant:—

Arriving in Washington to accept a dollar-a-year position, Sonny Tufts, a production expert, finds it difficult to obtain a room. His problem is settled when a desk clerk at a hotel gives him the bridal suite, because Olivia de Havilland, who had reserved it for Anne Shirley and James Dunn, newlyweds, did not occupy it at the appointed time. Olivia demands that he vacate the room, but Tufts refuses. On the following day, Tufts reports to take over his new duties as head of plane production, and finds that Olivia had been assigned as his secretary. He makes it clear to her that he detests red tape, and that he is not concerned about whose toes he steps on, in order to increase production. Impressed with his sincerity, Olivia promises to cooperate with him, but warns him that the bureaucrats will oppose any shortcuts he takes. She grows fond of Tufts, although she is in love with Jess Barker, counsel for the Senate Investigating Committee. Tufts' tactics, though they show results, incur the wrath of an influential industrialist, who conspires with Barker to hail Tufts before the Investigating Committee. Barker takes advantage of Olivia's love, and manages to obtain information, which he plans to use against Tufts. When the committee subpoenas Tufts, Olivia tearfully confesses that she had unwittingly given Barker the information he had. Realizing that she was in love with Tufts, Olivia barges into the committee hearing and makes a brilliant speech in Tufts' defense. Impressed, the committee thanks her and drops the investigation. Tufts and Olivia end up in each other's arms.

Dudley Nichols produced, directed, and wrote the screen play. The cast includes Harry Davenport, Agnes Moorehead, Jane Darwell, George Givot and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Old Acquaintance" with Bette Davis and Miriam Hopkins

(Warner Bros., no release date set; time, 110 min.)

In his review of "Old Acquaintance" as a stage play, Mr. Brooks Atkinson, drama critic of the *New York Times*, said that the story "is frail and unsubstantial and scarcely worth the trouble every one has taken with it." The same can be said of this, the film version. For despite its good production values, this drama is only a fair entertainment, and an over-long one at that. Too much talk slows down the action in many spots, tending to tire one. It has human interest and a few dramatic situations, but it fails to stir one's emotions. Except for Miss Hopkins' over-acting, the performances are generally good. Bette Davis' popularity with your patrons will be the deciding factor insofar as the box-office is concerned. Women will probably enjoy it more than men:—

After gaining fame as a writer, Bette Davis visits Miriam Hopkins, her girlhood friend, and John Loder, Miriam's husband. Miriam, jealous and possessed of a mean temper, fails to conceal her jealousy over Bette's success. She resolves to become a famous writer too. She writes several novels and, within eight years, gains fame and fortune. Her domineering attitude, however, alienates the affection of her husband and daughter (Dolores Moran). Meanwhile Loder had fallen in love with Bette, who did not permit him to express it. Still loyal to Miriam, Bette cautions her about

her treatment of Loder, but to no avail. Loder finally leaves her. Bette attempts to effect a reconciliation, but Loder declines. He again tells Bette that he loves her and, though she admits her love for him, she tells him that Miriam will always stand between them. They part. Ten years pass before they meet again. Loder, now an army officer, reveals that he is to be married. Bette arranges a meeting between Loder and his daughter, and makes him promise to visit Miriam. Meanwhile Gig Young, a youthful engineer, proposes marriage to Bette. Because he is ten years her junior, she asks for time to consider his offer. As he leaves, Young is joined by Dolores. They begin a friendship that eventually turns into love. When Loder visits Miriam, he inadvertently reveals that he was once in love with Bette. Miriam, in a violent tirade, accuses them of having had an affair while he was married to her, and Bette of now having one with Young. Her accusations are overheard by Dolores, who decides to break with Young. Bette, disgusted with Miriam, decides to accept Young's marriage proposal, unaware that he had fallen in love with Dolores. Learning of his now love, she persuades Dolores to return to him. Bette forgives the very repentant Miriam, and they decide to face middle-aged loneliness together.

John Van Druten and Lenore Coffee wrote the screen play, Dwight Deere Wiman produced it, and Vincent Sherman directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Falcon and the Co-Eds" with Tom Conway and Jean Brooks

(RKO, no release date set; time, 68 min.)

This latest of the "Falcon" mystery melodramas is moderately entertaining program fare. The production and acting are good, and there is some suspense, but the story is ordinary and it unfolds in a routine manner—the questioning of witnesses, the suspicious acts on the part of different characters, and the final solution which proves that the person least suspected is the murderer. The stupidity of a police inspector is used as comedy relief, but it is not particularly comical. The performances are good:—

The mysterious death of a professor at a fashionable seminary for girls brings Tom Conway, a private investigator, to the scene. Barbara Brown, head of the institution, and George Givot, a psychology professor, insist that the man had died a natural death. Rita Corday, moody daughter of the dead man, tells Conway that she was sure her father had been murdered. In the course of his investigation, Conway finds Isabel Jewel, a music teacher, behaving suspiciously, and he discovers that the dead man had been in love with Jean Brooks, a dramatic teacher. Later, he learns that the victim had been fed an overdose of sleeping tablets, which contained a poisonous drug. During the rehearsal of a school play, Miss Brown is stabbed to death. Conway uncovers the fact that Givot, although in love with Jean, has secretly married Isabel four years previously, in order to obtain admittance to the United States. When Police Inspector Cliff Work, and Ed Gargan, his aide, learn that Miss Brown had willed the school to Jean, they prepare to arrest both Jean and Givot. Conway, however, dissuades them. Isabel informs the police that she saw Rita standing over Miss Brown's body. Rita is arrested, but she breaks away and runs off toward a high cliff overlooking the sea. Isabel catches up with her. She tries to convince Rita that she is insane, and urges her to commit suicide. Conway arrives in time to save her. Isabel, however, slips and falls to her death. Conway proves that Isabel, jealous of the attachment between Jean and Givot, planned to murder them. She had killed Rita's father and Miss Brown, because they had made attempts to interfere with her plans.

Ardel Wray and Maurice Geraghty wrote the screen play. Mr. Geraghty produced it, and William Clemens directed it. The cast includes Olin Howlin, Amelita Ward, Patti Brill and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Cry 'Havoc' " with Margaret Sullivan,
Ann Sothern and Joan Blondell**
(MGM, no release date set; time, 97 min.)

A fair war melodrama. Based on the stage play of the same title, the action revolves around a group of civilian women, Americans stranded in Manila, who volunteer as nurses during the siege of Bataan. Coming from all walks of life, they are shown as a courageous group, who, despite extreme hardships and personal conflicts, stick to their posts, fully realizing that their capture is inevitable. The horror and destruction they experience are not pretty things to see. On the whole, there is nothing unusual about the film; its box-office chances will have to depend on whether or not your patrons are reluctant to see more war films. Its 97 minutes running time is much too long:—

When Captain Fay Bainter and Lieutenant Margaret Sullivan, army nurses in charge of a base hospital on Bataan, find themselves faced with a shortage of nurses, they send Marsha Hunt, a civilian aide, in search of volunteers. Marsha returns with nine recruits—Ann Sothern, a worldly-wise Irish girl; Joan Blondell, an ex-strip-tease artist; Diana Lewis, a native Southern girl; Heather Angel and Dorothy Morris, sisters, who were art students; Frances Gifford, who had a weakness for men; Ella Raines, an effeminate society girl; Gloria Grafton, a farm girl, and Fely Franquelli, a Filipino girl. Japanese air bombings become daily occurrences, and the experience of caring for the wounded and dying is a gruelling one for the new recruits. Ann, naturally wise-cracking and quick-tempered, carries on a private feud with Margaret, which is heightened by the fact that Ann was romantically inclined toward a Lieutenant, who was Margaret's secret husband; army regulations did not permit nurses to marry. Although supplies are running low, and convoys are unable to break through Japanese lines, the girls, given a chance to leave for Corregidor, elect to remain at their posts, realizing fully that there will be no escape. The general atmosphere becomes even more tense when Margaret is stricken with malaria; Dorothy becomes mentally deranged; Joan is wounded by shrapnel; Ella is strafed and killed by a lone Japanese plane; and word comes that Margaret's husband had been killed in battle. Ann, learning of Margaret's secret marriage, assures her that the Lieutenant had never attempted to return the love she felt for him. The sound of Japanese tanks engaged in mopping up operations indicate to the girls that Bataan had fallen. Without hysteria, they march out of the dug-out when a Japanese voice demands that they surrender.

Paul Osborn wrote the screen play, Edwin Knopf produced it, and Richard Thorpe directed it. The cast includes Connie Gilchrist and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Never a Dull Moment" with
the Ritz Brothers**

(Universal, November 19; time, 60 min.)

Good program fare. Wherever the Ritz Brothers are popular, this comedy with music should please. It is somewhat slow in starting, but it develops into a slapstick farce with hilarious situations. The comedy is brought about when they become innocently embroiled with gangsters in a jewel theft. The plot is thin and not to be taken seriously; it depends for its entertainment on the antics of the Ritz Brothers. There are some dance numbers, and a few pleasant tunes sung by Frances Langford. The Ritz Brothers sing two hilarious comedy songs:—

To celebrate the engagement of Stuart Crawford, her son, to Frances Langford, a cafe singer, Elizabeth Risdon, wealthy society matron, announces that she will give a party at the Club Algiers. This pleases George Zucco, gangster-owner of the club, for it gives him an opportunity to steal a valuable diamond necklace usually worn by Miss Risdon. Zucco telephones a crooked theatrical agency in Chicago, owned by a friend who used it as a clearing house for crooks, and requests that three "smart" boys be sent to him. Zucco was

unaware that he had spoken to Harry Ritz, of the Ritz Brothers, a broken-down vaudeville act. Desperate for a booking, Harry had impersonated Zucco's friend, and had promised to fill his needs, without realizing that Zucco wanted gunmen. When the boys arrive in New York, Zucco assigns Mary Beth Hughes, a pickpocket, to work with them. Mary takes Harry out on the dance floor, and causes him to jostle Miss Risdon. In the confusion she steals the necklace and slips it into Harry's pocket. Just then Harry's brothers steal a plate of sandwiches, and all three are chased out of the club by Franklyn Pangborn, the head waiter. On the following day, the boys see their picture in the paper and learn that they were suspected of the theft. Harry finds the necklace in his pocket and, to avoid detection, the three hide in the nearest building, only to find that it is the police station. They confess and explain their innocence. Working with the police, they confront Zucco at the club and trap him into admitting his guilt.

Mal Ronson and Stanley Roberts wrote the screen play, Howard Benedict produced it, and Edward Lilley directed it. The cast includes Jack LaRue, Sammy Stein, Igor and Pogi and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Lost Angel" with Margaret O'Brien,
James Craig and Marsha Hunt**

(MGM, no release date set; time, 91 min.)

Very pleasant entertainment. Little Margaret O'Brien's remarkable ability to arouse an emotional response earns for her the right to be called the most outstanding child star of today. Just by facial expressions, she conveys to the spectator what she feels. The story, which deals with the efforts of a group of scientists to train her in accordance with their scientific theories, is filled with many amusing situations that provoke hearty laughter. Human interest is aroused by the affection that develops between Margaret and James Craig, who, attracted by her appealing nature, prefers to see her react to life like a normal little girl instead of as a genius. All the characters are sympathetic:—

Left on the doorstep of a foundling home, Margaret O'Brien is raised from an infant by a group of scientists who seek to establish their theory that a child can become a genius if reared scientifically. For six years the scientists guide her physical and mental training, and she becomes a wonder-child. Learning about Margaret, James Craig, a crack newspaper reporter, interviews her. The child depresses him; she laughs at him when he insists that fairy tales are true, and she bewilders him with her knowledge of psychology, literature and science. Craig leaves her wishing that she were more like a girl her own age. That evening, Margaret, eager to see the outside world as envisioned by Craig, sets out alone to find him. By indicating that he is her father, Margaret gets one of Craig's fellow reporters to lead her to him. As a result, Craig has a difficult time explaining the father angle to Marsha Hunt, his sweetheart. Learning of her desire to see the many things he had spoken of, Craig shows her around the city. By the time he is ready to return her to the scientists, Craig learns that they had been quarantined with measles, and that he would have to take care of her for a few days. At Craig's apartment, Margaret finds adventure when Keenan Wynn, a notorious gangster, seeks refuge there after escaping from prison. Margaret wins his heart and helps him to persuade Craig to gather evidence that eventually clears him of the crime for which he had been sentenced. When the professors get over their measles, and Margaret is brought back, they find that she had become a human child, and that their scientific plans are shattered. Craig and Martha plan to marry, so that they can become her parents.

Isobel Lennart wrote the screen play, Robert Sisk produced it, and Roy Rowland directed it. The cast includes Philip Merivale, Henry O'Neill, Sara Haden, Donald Meek, Howard Freeman and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Gangway for Tomorrow" with Margo, John Carradine and Robert Ryan

(RKO, no release date set; time, 69 min.)

In spite of the fact that the story material covers familiar ground, "Gangway for Tomorrow," because of the novel way in which it has been presented, is a timely and fairly interesting program entertainment. The story, which is told in the flashback manner, is a series of five unrelated episodes dealing with incidents in the lives of five defense workers, whose thoughts reveal their backgrounds and their reasons for working in a war plant. Although the players lack marquee strength, each gives a plausible performance:—

While driving five fellow-workers to a plane factory, Charles Arnt surprises them with an invitation to Sunday dinner at his home. He explains that he had entertained his wife with imaginary stories about their past lives, and that she was eager to meet them. As Arnt tells them of the fictitious careers he had invented for them, their thoughts go back to their real past lives. Margo, a French refugee, recalls when she was active in the French "underground," masking her activities by singing in a Paris cafe. Betrayed by a traitor, she and her associates had been sent before a firing squad. By pretending that she would be willing to entertain Nazi soldiers, Margo had escaped and made her way to America. Robert Ryan, a former auto racer, recalls that he and his pals had planned to join the air force immediately after Pearl Harbor, but an accident in his last auto race had left him with injuries that prevented him from donning a uniform. He determined to build planes for his pals. James Bell, a former prison warden, recalls the agony he had experienced when, because of an executioner's illness, he had been compelled to throw the switch that ended the life of his brother, an incorrigible criminal. Amelita Ward recalls when she had won the "Miss America" title at Atlantic City. Thrilled and excited, she had paid little attention to William Terry, her sweetheart. Not until he had left her to join the air force, and until her dreams of stardom had been shattered, did she realize what she had lost. She decided to make amends by helping to build planes for Terry. John Carradine recalls his life as a hobo and his lack of interest in the war effort, until Harry Davenport, a small-town judge, had pointed out that, in time of war, he must earn his right to live as he pleases in time of peace.

Arch Oboler wrote the screen play, and John Auer produced and directed it. The cast includes Erford Gage, Warren Hymer, Alan Carney and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Mr. Muggs Steps Out" with the East Side Kids

(Monogram, Dec. 10; time, 63 min.)

An amusing addition to the "East Side Kids" series of program melodramas. As in most of the other pictures, this, too, has a thin story, but the action moves along at a steady pace and the comedy is plentiful. This time the "Kids" are employed as servants at the home of a wealthy family, and they innocently become involved in the theft of a diamond necklace. Much laughter is provoked by their rowdy antics while serving guests at a dinner party. Joan Marsh, as a young sophisticate, adds much to the comedy:—

Faced with a jail sentence because of a petty offense, Leo Gorcey is saved when the judge parols him in the custody of Betty Blythe, wealthy society matron, whose daughter (Joan Marsh) felt that honest employment would reform the wayward youth. When Miss Blythe gives an engagement party for Joan and Stanley Brown, a timid youth, Gorcey induces her to engage the East Side Kids as servants. During the party, Nick Stuart, a diamond thief, manages to slip into the house a guest and, after stealing a valuable necklace, leaves hurriedly. He is recognized, however, by Patsy Moran, the maid, who cannot recall where she had met him. When the robbery is discovered, Emmet Vogan, Joan's father, sus-

pects the boys. But Patsy, recalling that she had met Stuart through Gabriel Dell at an East Side dance hall, persuades Vogan to give the boys a chance to clear themselves. The boys, followed by Patsy and Joan, go to the dance hall. There, Patsy meets Dell and induces him to telephone Stuart, inviting him to meet Joan, who had hidden her identity. Meanwhile Brown, who had followed Joan, reveals her identity when he tries secretly to arrange with Dell to accept a beating, in order to show Joan that he can protect her. Aware that the girls were trying to trick them, Stuart and Bell decide to kidnap Joan and hold her for ransom. Their plan succeeds, but Gorcey and the boys trail the thugs to their hideout and capture them. Joan is freed, and the thugs and necklace are turned over to the police.

William X. Crowley and Beryl Sachs wrote the screen play, Sam Katzman and Jack Dietz produced it, and William Beaudine directed it. Barney Sarecky was the associate producer. The cast includes Huntz Hall, Billy Benedict, Halliwell Hobbs, Noah Beery, Sr., and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Women in Bondage" with Gail Patrick, Nancy Kelly and Bill Henry

(Monogram, Dec. 24; time, 71 min.)

The degradation of German womanhood under the Hitler regime is the theme of this anti-Nazi drama; adult audiences should find it interesting program fare. In many respects the film is somewhat like "Hitler's Children"; the story conveys in unmistakable terms the insidious practices of Nazi officials, who teach the women of Germany to accept with unquestioning obedience the fanatic political and religious philosophy of the Reich. The sterilization of women arbitrarily judged to be unfit, and the teachings to young women of the "glory" of bearing illegitimate children, are among the barbaric practices exposed. While these practices are made plain, they have been handled in an inoffensive manner. Monogram has endowed the film with a better than average cast. The performances are good:—

Gail Patrick, married to Roland Varno, a Nazi officer on the Russian front, returns after an absence of ten years to war-torn Germany, and to her husband's family estate, where she is greeted by Mary Forbes, her mother-in-law, and Tala Birell, her sister-in-law, who was a firm believer in Nazi ideology. Gertrude Michael, leader of a youth movement, appoints Gail, against her will, Section Leader of a group of girls. Included in the group was Nancy Kelly, a maid at the estate, who loved Bill Henry, a handsome Storm Trooper. Because only physically perfect women may marry a Storm Trooper, the Reich rejects Nancy on account of near-sightedness. Heartbroken, Nancy becomes furious when Henry spurns her; she denounces the government hysterically. For this, she is declared insane by Gertrude, who orders her arrest. Gail, however, helps Nancy to escape. But she is later found by the Gestapo, who shoot her when she attempts to rejoin Henry. Gertrude, peeved at Gail because of her leniency toward her girls, orders her examined under the ruling that all physically fit German women must bear children. Gail protests against the examination, claiming that her husband, who had just returned from the front paralyzed, was incapable of fathering a child. Gail is horrified when Gertrude compels her to accept Alan Baxter, her brother-in-law, as the one who would father her child. Gail's husband commits suicide when he learns of the situation. Disconsolate, Gail deliberately allows the lights to shine through her bedroom window during a blackout, and American planes, raiding Germany, demolish the estate. Both Gail and Baxter are killed.

Houston Branch wrote the screen play, Herman Millauskowsky produced it, and Steve Sekely directed it. The cast includes Maris Wrixon, Rita Quigley, Felix Bausch, H. B. Warner and others.

Adult entertainment.

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HERE AND THERE

"IN THE DIFFICULT position in which independent exhibitors find themselves, it is as important to express their appreciation to those who lend a hand as it is to condemn those who are adding to the exhibitors' burden," states Abram F. Myers, Allied's general counsel, in a recent organization bulletin commending Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer for its decision to make available ten selected pictures originally issued in previous seasons, in order to aid exhibitors who, because of the distributors' practice of withholding completed pictures, find themselves victims of an artificial product shortage, which in turn makes them targets for high film-rental demands.

In announcing the availability of the ten pictures, MGM emphasized that no effort would be made to sell them as re-issues, but that they will be available to MGM customers, who may book as many as their individual situations require.

"Ordinarily," said Myers, "exhibitors eye re-issues warily because they usually represent no more than an effort on the part of the distributor to take advantage of a thin market by building huge profits on productions that already have been liquidated. But Metro's action appears to be a genuine effort to aid the exhibitors by making available a substantial number of excellent pictures, from which they may pick and choose, and on terms which reflect this laudable purpose.

"Thank you Metro. We hope that you will not draw too fine a distinction between customers and non-customers. All exhibitors who really need help should receive it. We also hope that other distributors will follow your fine example."

In these days of industry strife, when independent exhibitors and their organizations are vehemently and justifiably condemning the business practices of the major companies, to say nothing of the abhorrent business ethics of Columbia, the company of broken promises, it is indeed satisfying to find that National Allied has not permitted itself to lose its sense of fairness, and has seen fit to declare openly its gratitude for a commendable act on the part of a major distributor.

Myers' statement will undoubtedly put a damper on those who consistently maintain that Allied's leaders are no more than a group of "professional agitators," whose sole aim is to keep exhibitor-distributor relations in a constant state of turmoil. "Professional agitators" do not laud those whom they oppose.

* * *

IN A LETTER TO Representative Robert L. Doughton, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, Pete J. Wood, secretary of the ITO of Ohio, points out that the proposed 20% tax on admission prices, in its present form, will compel many exhibitors to reduce their established, popular-priced admission rates. To avoid such occurrences, Wood sets forth the following six recommendations for revisions in the tax plan:

"1. Permit the exemption of all children's admissions of less than ten cents to remain.

"2. Many, many hundreds of theatres now charge children 13 cents plus 2 cents federal tax,—total 15 cents. If modi-

fied as your committee contemplates, a 13 cent established admission would call for a 4 cent tax and a total of 17 cents. As custom requires that there be some substantial differential between the adult rate and the children's rate, the lower-priced theatres would, under this set-up, drop their children's prices to ten cents with a 2 cent tax. As the low-priced houses cannot afford this loss of 3 cents per children's admission, we recommend that the law be amended to read: 'Children's admission of from 10 to 13 cents be taxed 2 cents per admission.'

"3. Under the modified law, adult admissions of from 11 to 20 cents will be taxed 4 cents. This would eliminate entirely the popular 25 cent admission, which, under the existing law, is made up of 22 cents plus 3 cents tax. Under the modified plan, the 20 cents established admission carries a 4 cent tax, and the next step beyond this, a 6 cent tax. No theatre presently charging 22 cents plus 3 cents tax would retain this established rate because it gains nothing except, to be brutally frank, to collect a larger tax for the government. So what happens: These houses drop back to an established rate of 20 cents and collect a 4 cent tax. In our opinion the Treasury will get more money from this bracket if the law is amended to read: 'All admissions of from 11 to 21 cents shall be taxed 4 cents per admission.'

"4. Admissions ranging from 22 cents to 30 cents to be taxed 6 cents.

"5. We submit the same facts regarding established admissions of 41 and 42 cents as set forth in No. 3 above, and recommend: 'All admissions of from 31 cents to 42 cents be taxed 8 cents per admission.' This would enable the industry to retain the popular admission rate of 50 cents.

"6. Beginning with 43 cents, 2 cents for each ten cents to apply."

Wood's recommendations are worthy of your consideration, for they are aimed at easing the hardships that will be caused to exhibitors in small-town, suburban, and neighborhood areas, whose theatres cater to patrons of moderate means and limited earnings. The people in these situations are finding it difficult enough to cope with the present high cost of living and increased taxation. To most of them, the motion picture is the only form of entertainment within their means. An increase in admission prices, because of tax rates, will have the effect of decreasing their theatre attendance, thus resulting in decreased revenue to the Government, not only in admission taxes, but also in income and corporate taxes of the theatres, which would necessarily follow the decline in business.

Our industry cannot escape taxation. The cost of carrying on the war requires much taxing, and we will have to stand our share of the burden. You should, however, use your efforts towards seeking a modification of the proposed tax rates, so that popular-priced scales on admissions up to fifty cents will be affected least.

If you agree with Wood's recommendations, or if you can improve on them, convey them to your congressmen. Ask them to use their influence to keep motion picture entertainment within the reach of the masses, and to help you stay in business.

"Minesweeper" with Richard Arlen and Jean Parker

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 67 min.)

A mildly entertaining program service melodrama. There is no novelty either in the plot or presentation, and the outcome is obvious; therefore, it fails to hold one's interest. Except for one or two situations, the film is sorely lacking in excitement. It has some comedy and a subdued romance. The players do their best, but they cannot overcome the weak story material:—

Using a fictitious name, Richard Arlen, a former Naval lieutenant who deserted because of gambling debts, rejoins the Navy when the Japs attack Pearl Harbor. Guinn Williams, Arlen's new-found buddy, takes him home where he meets and falls in love with Jean Parker, Williams' niece. Arlen makes record progress as a recruit, as does Russell Hayden, his rival for Jean's affections. During a diving operation to inspect a sunken Jap submarine, Hayden saves Arlen's life by cutting him loose from the entangled air-hose lines. While Arlen is put through the de-compression chamber, Lieutenant Frank Fenton, his superior, discovers an inscribed watch in his clothes, indicating that he had been an honor student at Annapolis. Fenton starts a quiet investigation to learn Arlen's true identity. To win money to buy an engagement ring for Jean, Arlen gambles and overstay's his leave. Williams reports in his place, and is killed when his ship strikes a Jap mine. Contrite, Arlen discloses his past to Jean and, despite her protests, departs with the intention of deserting again. An emergency broadcast for all Navy men to report to their bases sends him back to duty. Fenton, who had learned of his desertion, places him under arrest, but permits him to accompany Hayden on a diving mission to locate a new type of Jap mine in the harbor. They find one, and Arlen, sensing the danger, uses a ruse to have Hayden pulled to the surface while he solves the secret of the mine. He is blown to death in so doing. On the waiting diving launch, Fenton tears into shreds the confidential telegram revealing Arlen as a deserter.

Edward T. Lowe and Maxwell Shane wrote the screen play, William Pine and William Thomas produced it, and William Berke directed it. The cast includes Chick Chandler, Douglas Fowley and others. Morally suitable for all.

"Happy Land" with Don Ameche, Frances Dee and Harry Carey

(20th Century-Fox, December 3; time, 75 min.)

Excellent! It is a deeply stirring drama, expertly performed by a fine cast. The production is a credit to the directorial skill of Irving Pichel, who has given the film a simplicity and honesty that should be understood, appreciated, and enjoyed by all types of audiences. It is a tender, sympathetic story of a congenial, small-town drug store owner (Don Ameche), who becomes embittered when he learns that his son had been killed in action. Although loved and respected by his neighbors, Ameche avoids them. He is roused from his bereavement by the appearance of his dead grandfather (Harry Carey), in the form of an apparition, who seeks to assure him that the boy did not die in vain. He takes Ameche back into the past, when he returned from World War I and married Frances Dee. In flash-back manner is shown the birth of Ameche's son, and the events that took place in his life from childhood to manhood. Shown are the boy's childish joys and sorrows; his school days; his puppy love affairs; his enrollment in pharmacy school, in order to follow in his father's footsteps; and his enlistment in the Navy when World War II breaks out. Realizing that his son died so that others, too, might enjoy the American way of life, Ameche's bitterness leaves him. Resuming his normal way of life, both Ameche and his wife find solace in the visit of one of his son's buddies, who tells them of their boy's last moments, and how he died helping others.

There is deep human interest throughout the story, and some of the situations are so touching, one finds it difficult to hold back the tears. The devotion between Ameche and his son gives the film many tender moments. As the grief-stricken father, Ameche gives one of the finest performances in his career. The others in the cast are superb; they play their individual roles with restraint and understanding.

Kathryn Scola and Julien Josephson wrote the screen play from the novel by MacKinlay Kantor. Kenneth Macgowan produced it, and Irving Pichel directed it. The cast includes Ann Rutherford, Cara Williams, Richard Crane, Henry Morgan, Minor Watson, Dickie Moore, James West, Larry Olsen and many others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Henry Aldrich Haunts a House" with Jimmy Lydon

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 72 min.)

With a good deal of the action taking place in an eerie atmosphere, this latest of the "Henry Aldrich" comedies emerges as the best one of the series. "Henry's" adventures in an old mansion, amid weird surroundings, and the circumstances that lead him to believe that he had unknowingly committed a murder, while under the influence of a fluid designed to treble a man's strength, result in situations that will provoke peals of hilarious laughter. Discriminating patrons may find the story silly, but even they should find much to laugh at:—

To be near Joan Mortimer, daughter of a scientist, Jimmy Lydon becomes one of her father's extra-curricular students. Lydon visits Joan on a stormy night and finds her alone. Both go into the laboratory, where Lydon accidentally drinks a fluid, one of Joan's father's concoctions, designed to treble a man's strength. On his way home, the fluid makes Lydon ill and, losing his sense of direction, he heads for Kenniston Manor, a reputedly haunted house. The following morning, Lydon wakes up in his room, fully clothed, unable to recollect what had happened after he had become ill. At breakfast, he learns from John Litel, his father, that Vaughan Glaser, the school principal, who was executor of the Kenniston Manor estate, had disappeared on the previous night while taking inventory of the manor's treasures. Lucien Littlefield, a teacher, who had been with Glaser, was suspected of having murdered Glaser to obtain a precious ring. Lydon finds the ring in his pocket and, reasoning that he had committed the murder while under the influence of the fluid, "confesses." The police do not believe him, but they decide to follow his movements. Together with Joan and Charles Smith, his pal, Lydon goes to the manor in search of the principal's body. After a series of weird happenings, during which time they are attacked by a mysterious "giant," they discover Glaser, still alive, wrapped up like a mummy. They discover also that the manor was being used as headquarters for a ring of counterfeiters, who had hired a huge wrestler to terrorize intruders. The police arrive in time to save the youngsters from harm, and to capture the gang.

Val Burton and Muriel R. Bolton wrote the screen play, Michael Kraike produced it, and Hugh Bennett directed it. The cast includes Olive Blakeney, Mike Mazurki and others. Morally suitable for all.

"The Cross of Lorraine" with Pierre Aumont and Gene Kelly

(MGM, no release date set; time, 90 min.)

A heavy war drama. Though well produced and expertly acted, its reception by your patrons will have to depend on whether or not they are in the mood to accept this type of entertainment. The story, which deals with the inhuman treatment suffered by French war prisoners in Nazi military camps, is relentless in its depiction of the barbaric tortures of the Nazis. Certain sequences are a bit too gory for those with weak stomachs. The action, though slow-moving, is interesting and filled with suspense. Most of the excitement occurs towards the finish, where the populace of a French village revolts against the Nazis. There is no comedy to relieve the tragic happenings:—

Homesick and weary of fighting, a company of French soldiers lays down its arms after the Germans promise them peace and a safe return home. The men become bitter when they find themselves sent to a Nazi prison camp. Among the prisoners are Pierre Aumont, a lawyer in civilian life; Gene Kelly, a rebellious ex-taxicab driver; Richard Whorf, a doctor; Hume Cronyn, a former salesman familiar with Nazi political methods; Joseph Calleia, a professional soldier who hated fascism; and Wallace Ford, a simple-minded peasant. Housed in crude filthy barracks, and placed on starvation rations, the men suffer untold hardships. Ford is killed in an unsuccessful attempt to escape. Sir Cedric Hardwicke, an interned Catholic priest, is shot when he persists in conducting last rites for Ford. Incensed, Kelly attacks the Nazi guards, and is thrown into solitary confinement. There, while chained, he spits into the face of Peter Lorre, a cruel Nazi sergeant, who beats him and breaks his spirit. Cronyn, because of his willingness to collaborate, is made interpreter and given special privileges. Through a clever ruse engineered by his fellows, Cronyn is machine gunned by the Nazis. Aumont takes over Cronyn's duties. He is branded a

turncoat by his comrades, but Whorf, the doctor, understands his motives. Aumont gains the confidence of the Nazi officers and, at the opportune moment, successfully arranges the escape of his comrades. All make their way to Cadignan, a French village in Unoccupied France, where they complete arrangements to become guerrilla fighters. As they prepare to leave the town, a Nazi regiment arrives and promises special privileges to the families of those who will volunteer to join their labor battalions. Aumont exposes the emptiness of their promises by recounting the horrors he endured in the prison camp. His harangue incites a battle between the villagers and the Nazis. The Germans are wiped out and the villagers, after setting fire to their homes, head for the south of France.

Michael Kanin, Ring Lardner, Jr., Alexander Essay, and Robert D. Andrews wrote the screen play, Edwin Knopf produced it, and Tay Garnett directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Riding High" with Dorothy Lamour, Dick Powell and Victor Moore

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 89 min.)

Combining music, comedy, and romance, this should satisfy most patrons, in spite of the fact that it drags considerably in spots. It undoubtedly will prove a good box-office attraction, because of the popularity of the stars, the lavish production, and the Technicolor photography. The story, which has a western background, is pretty thin and at times silly, but it has a number of amusing situations. The brightest features are Victor Moore's eccentricities as an amicable old scoundrel; Cass Daley's clever rendition of novelty songs; a musical sequence in which Milt Britton and his band wreck their instruments; and a chuck wagon race that is highly slapstick. Miss Lamour dances and sings a few songs:—

Learning that her father had become part owner of a silver mine, Dorothy Lamour visits him in Arizona and discovers that the mine is defunct. She obtains employment as an entertainer at a dude ranch operated by Cass Daley, where she meets Dick Powell, owner of the other half of the mine, who was unsuccessfully trying to sell part of his stock, in order to finance the mining operations. Dorothy mistrusts him. Victor Moore, a counterfeiter, decides to help Powell. He persuades the young man to flash thousands of dollars in counterfeit money, thus enticing guests at the ranch to invest money in the mine. Meanwhile Gil Lamb, the local sheriff, learns from a police circular that Moore is a counterfeiter. He refrains from making an arrest, however, seeking to catch Moore with counterfeit money on his person. A game of hide and seek follows, with Powell becoming involved reluctantly as the counterfeit bills pass between Moore and himself. When the investors discover that they had been duped, Powell returns their money. Moore, however, determines to raise the money Powell needs. Using the counterfeit money, he places a bet on the outcome of a chuck wagon race and, by mutilating the wagon of his opponent, manages to win a huge sum of money. He turns the winnings over to Powell, who, aware that the race had been won unfairly, returns the money to the loser, a wealthy cattleman. Impressed by Powell's honesty, the cattleman invests the money in the mine, where rich copper deposits had been discovered. Moore goes to jail, and Dorothy goes to Powell's arms.

Walter DeLeon, Arthur Phillips, and Art Arthur wrote the screen play, Fred Kohlmar produced it, and George Marshall directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Swing Fever" with Kay Kyser, William Gargan and Marilyn Maxwell

(MGM, no release date set; time, 80 min.)

A mildly entertaining comedy with music; it should appeal mostly to young people. It has a few good gags that provoke laughs, but for the most part it is silly and may prove tiresome to adults. The action revolves around Kay Kyser, whose ability to hypnotize people involves him with a crooked fight manager. Since Kyser is presented as a simpleton, one cannot feel much sympathy for him. Most people will welcome the musical interludes, which are of the popular variety. Kyser's popularity as an orchestra leader should be of considerable help at the box-office. It is obvious that Lena Horne, who appears in one song sequence, has been added to the cast to give the film added marquee value:—

Kay Kyser, a budding music composer, cursed with an "evil eye" with which he can hypnotize people, comes to Broadway in search of a publisher. At the offices of a music publishing company, he meets Marilyn Maxwell, a torch

singer, who inadvertently leaves with his music. He follows her to a gymnasium, where she had gone to meet William Gargan, a crooked fight manager, who was her fiance. Gargan learns of Kyser's hypnotic power and decides to use it to help Nat Pendleton, his fighter, win the championship. To keep Kyser happy and unaware of his intentions, Gargan arranges with a night-club band to play Kyser's compositions. The young man and his music become a sensational success. Meanwhile Kyser falls in love with Marilyn. On the eve of the championship bout, Gargan persuades Marilyn to encourage Kyser's love, and in return to obtain his promise to wield his hypnotic power on Pendleton's opponent. She was to inform Kyser that Pendleton was her brother. Kyser believes Marilyn's story and agrees. Marilyn, however, falls in love with Kyser and, on the night of the fight, confesses her part in the plot. Meanwhile Morris Ankrum, Gargan's rival fight manager, learns of the scheme. He manages to kidnap Kyser, and instructs his henchmen to hold him captive until after the fight. Aroused, Kyser gains his freedom by wielding his hypnotic power on his captors. He makes a mad dash to the sports arena, arriving in time to hypnotize Pendleton's opponent, thus helping Pendleton to score a knockout blow. Pleased at this turn of events, Gargan gives Marilyn and Kyser his blessing.

Nat Perrin and Warren Wilson wrote the screen play, Irving Starr produced it, and Tim Whelan directed it. The cast includes Maxie Rosenbloom, Clyde Filmore, Lou Nova, Pamela Blake and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"No Time for Love" with Claudette Colbert and Fred MacMurray

(Paramount, no release date set; time, 83 min.)

A highly entertaining romantic comedy. It is fast-moving and comical, with hardly a dull moment. The action revolves around a sophisticated woman-photographer, who, against her will, falls in love with a muscular sandhog. With each believing that they are not made for each other, their romance turns into a battle of brains against brawn, resulting in a series of nonsensical but riotous situations that will keep the spectator laughing throughout. An extremely hilarious situation is that in which Fred MacMurray "debunks" a "strong man," whom Miss Colbert had hired as a model. Both stars give excellent performances. Their popularity is probably enough to bring patrons to the box-office:—

After a row with her managing editor, because of her love for "arty" pictures, Claudette Colbert, a woman photographer, is sent to a tunnel project to photograph the sandhogs at work. There she meets Fred MacMurray, a two-fisted Irishman, who regards her as a jinx. Claudette saves MacMurray's life when she pushes him out of the way of a falling girder. When one of the sandhogs accuses him of showing off, he knocks him unconscious. Claudette snaps the picture. After exchanging insults with MacMurray, Claudette departs, leaving her tripod behind. Curious to find out what kind of a woman she is, MacMurray decides to visit her, using the return of the tripod as an excuse. Meanwhile Claudette, who had been amused at MacMurray's antics, tells her friends about him and refers to him as "Superman." When MacMurray arrives at Claudette's apartment, her male friends try to make sport of his strength. MacMurray knocks their heads together and stamps out. The publication of the picture showing MacMurray fighting in the tunnel results in his getting a four-month suspension. To make amends, and because she wants to cure herself of loving him, Claudette hires MacMurray as her assistant. MacMurray's light treatment of his work results in many amusing complications, including one in which he becomes tangled with June Havoc, a chorus girl. Despite her efforts to the contrary, Claudette finds herself more deeply in love with him. MacMurray eventually falls for her charms but angrily discards her when he learns that she had hired him to prove to herself that he was below her level. Learning that the tunnel would have to be abandoned because of mud oozing in, MacMurray invents a "freezing" machine to save the project. Claudette goes to the tunnel to photograph the tests. The machine fails to hold back the mud, but, as a result of photographs taken by Claudette, it is proved that MacMurray's idea will work. MacMurray and Claudette become reconciled.

Claude Binyon wrote the screen play, and Mitchell Leisen produced and directed it. Fred Kohlmar was the associate producer. The cast includes Ilka Chas, Richard Haydn, Paul McGrath and others.

There are no objectionable situations.

"Deerslayer" with Bruce Kellogg and Jean Parker

(Republic, November 22; time, 67 min.)

Reviewed by ABRAM F. MYERS*

Different. It was a discerning genius who detected in the quaint old-fashioned writing of James Fenimore Cooper certain of the basic elements of motion picture entertainment—action, suspense, romance, scenery. The adaptation of these writings to the screen presents, first of all, a difficult re-write job because the stories are long drawn out and little of the original dialog can be used. Cooper devotees will be gratified that so much of *Deerslayer* has been retained and will recognize the obvious need for emphasizing fast-moving action at the expense of the turgid dialogs of the original. If the picture has a weakness it is that so many scenes and incidents of the story have been crowded into it that there was little time for the development of background and characterizations. This affects the smoothness and continuity at times and the lack of characterization may disappoint the bookish element who are attracted to the picture by its title. However, this may be all to the good so far as the more numerous addicts of action pictures are concerned, for the picture offers all the features of a standardized western—Indians on the warpath, fast riding on calico ponies, villainy, heroism and lots of hard fighting.

Story. The story involves the adventures, perils and loves of early settlers in Northern New York who are attacked by savages. *Deerslayer* (Bruce Kellogg), "born white" and orphaned when a child, was raised by Chief Uncas (Robert Warwick), of the Mohicans, as a companion of his own son, Jingo-Good (Larry Parks). As the story opens, the Huron Tribe has taken to the warpath and invaded the land of the Mohicans. Briarthorn (Phil Van Zandt), a renegade Mohican, has gone over to the side of the Hurons. By "bad Injun" treachery he kills Chief Brave Eagle (Many Treaties) and kidnaps his daughter, Princess Wah-Tah (Yvonne de Carlo), who is betrothed to Jingo-Good.

Deerslayer joins his Indian friends in the battle against the Hurons but when he discovers that Hetty Hutter (Wanda McKay) and her little brother Bobby (Johnny Michaels) have been attacked, he seeks to rescue them. The Hutters live on a shoal in the middle of the lake and use the Ark, a crude ferry, to travel back and forth to shore. *Deerslayer* gets Hetty and Bobby to the Ark and eventually to the Hutter home, but not until Bobby has been badly wounded. *Deerslayer* then decides to go to the stockade to get a doctor for Bobby. At the stockade he is informed that a doctor will be sent to the Hutter home, with an escort, provided *Deerslayer* will set out in another direction to head off his old friend Harry March (Warren Ashe), who is moving towards the stockade with a large company of prospective brides for the womenless frontiersmen.

The bargain is struck and *Deerslayer* sets forth to find Harry and warn him of the Huron uprising. He finds Harry after the latter has fallen into a rapids while attempting to string a rope over the stream so that his charges could cross in safety. *Deerslayer* saves Harry from drowning. They signal the women to remain behind and Harry and *Deerslayer* repair to the Hutter home to inquire after Bobby and to renew old acquaintances. They find that Bobby has died of his wounds. Hetty seeks solace from Harry. Both adventurers, however, fall in love with Judith (Jean Parker), the older sister.

Meantime, the war between the Indians goes on and Chief Uncas is killed by the Hurons and the Mohican village is put to the torch. Jingo-Good vows to avenge his father and to rescue the Princess Wah-Tah. He joins forces with *Deerslayer* and the Hutters. Mr. Hutter (Addison Richards) and Harry March make a foray on the shore and are captured by the Hurons. Learning from Jingo-Good of the Huron's superstition concerning persons of unsound mind, Hetty feigns insanity and goes directly to Chief Rivenoak (Trevor Burdette) of the Hurons and by means of messages translated by Wah-Tah arranges to ransom both her father and Harry.

Deerslayer and Harry make a spectacular attempt to rescue Wah-Tah and are themselves captured. Just as they are about to be tomahawked their bonds are cut and in the ensuing struggle they escape, carrying Wah-Tah with them. Enraged by this turn of events, the Indians storm and occupy the Hutter home before *Deerslayer* and Harry can return. After much bitter fighting in which *Deerslayer* and Harry are aided by the Hutter girls, who man the Ark, and in the course of which Mr. Hutter and Hetty are killed, they are finally rescued by the men from the stockade who have

at last decided to drive out the warring Indians. Judith confesses her love for Harry and *Deerslayer* magnanimously proclaims that he lost to a better man.

Exploitation. The picture calls for double-barreled exploitation, one aimed at the western fans and the other at the bookish element. The appeal to lovers of action pictures is obvious. But properly handled the picture should attract a wider audience, including many who do not regularly attend the movies. *Leather-Stocking Tales* stand high in American literature and of these *Deerslayer* and *Last of the Mohicans* are most beloved. There is scarcely an adult American whose youthful imagination was not stirred by these great adventure stories, whether he encountered them "on his own" or as acquired reading in school. It is only reasonable to expect that out of this vast potential audience there will be many who are eager to see on the screen such familiar heroes as *Deerslayer*, *Hurry-Harry*, *Jingo-Good* and *Floating Tim*, as well as pictures of *Glimmerglass* and the Ark and other scenes so graphically described by Cooper. Even those who are too young to master the author's antiquated style, nevertheless possess that innate love of adventure and Indian lore that is characteristic of American youth. The bookish angle can be overdone with some classes of patrons, but it may be stressed in circularizing school children, Boy Scouts, Parent-Teachers, etc.

It is understood that the producers of *Deerslayer* are considering a series of pictures based on the writings of James Fenimore Cooper. It is to be hoped that these will materialize. As experience is gained, technique will improve and a valuable series should result. While *Deerslayer* was the last of the *Leather-Stocking Tales* to be written, it is first in point of chronology and the producers have chosen the proper story to initiate the series. With the major companies curtailing their output and withholding completed pictures from the market, exhibitors should make a point of encouraging independent productions.

While *Deerslayer* involves a great deal of shooting the picture never becomes morbid or gruesome and it is morally suitable for all classes of patrons.

**In a spirit of banter I once told my friend Pete Harrison that if he would make a picture, I would review it. Pete in the same spirit holds me to my promise. I hasten to disarm all critics in advance by admitting—even asserting that I am in no way qualified by experience or otherwise to review a picture. Also, that I have had to lean backwards throughout the effort in order not to make my partiality to Pete too obvious.*

"Son of Dracula" with Lon Chaney, Robert Paige and Louise Allbritton

(Universal, November 5; time, 79 min.)

Where supernatural horror melodramas are liked, "Son of Dracula" should prove acceptable program fare. Like its predecessor, "Dracula," which Universal produced in 1931, this, too, is extremely wierd, fantastic, and morbid, but, because the theme has been done many times, it fails to attain the terrifying impact of the original. Generally, it is a collection of familiar spine-chilling activities that take place amid the usual eerie surroundings. The action deals with "undead" people, who, although dead, continue to live on by drinking the blood of human beings. They remain in their coffins during the day and emerge only during the night, at which time they assume the forms of vampire bats and carry on their gruesome activities. Trick photography has been employed to good advantage.

The story revolves around Lon Chaney, as the son of Dracula, who leaves his native Hungary to visit the Southern plantation of Colonel George Irving, whom he had met in Budapest. Upon his arrival, Chaney assumes the form of a vampire bat and murders the Colonel. Louise Allbritton, the Colonel's daughter, a morbid woman who sought immortality through vampirism, forsakes Robert Paige, her fiance, to marry Chaney. In a gun fight between Chaney and Paige, Louise is killed. After Chaney transforms her into one of the "undead," Louise visits Paige and offers him immortality if he will help her dispose of Chaney. She informs him that this could be done by burning Chaney's coffin, thus preventing him from returning to it before dawn. After a series of horrendous events, Paige succeeds in destroying both Chaney and Louise.

Eric Taylor wrote the screen play, Ford Beebe produced it, and Robert Siodmak directed it. The cast includes Evelyn Ankers, Frank Craven, J. Edward Bromberg, Samuel S. Hinds and others. Not for children.

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AMAZING FACTS AND FINDINGS

On September 13th of this year, in the United States District Court at Bangor, Maine, reports were filed by Ralph E. Mason, a Special Master appointed by the Court, in anti-trust actions brought by Millinocket Theatre, Inc., of Millinocket, and Clarence F. Millett, of Bridgton, Maine, against Samuel Kurson, his son Newell Kurson and others, operating the Graphic Circuit in Northern New England, and various major distributors. In the action of Millinocket Theatre, Inc., all the eight major distributors were defendants, as well as the members of the Graphic Circuit; in the action by Millett the distributor defendants were Vitagraph, RKO, United Artists and Columbia.

The Special Master found in favor of each of the plaintiffs against all the defendants named in their suits. The findings in favor of Millinocket Theatre, Inc., were for \$27,500 actual damages, and in favor of Millett \$34,000 actual damages. Under the law, findings of actual damages are automatically trebled by the Court, and reasonable attorneys' fees and costs, including stenographic fees and the Master's compensation, are awarded to the plaintiffs.

Unless, therefore, some change is made by the Court in the findings and conclusions of the Master, the total amount awarded may be well in excess of \$200,000.

The actions were tried during the fall, winter and spring of 1941-42 at Bangor, some of the evidence, however, being taken at Boston. The plaintiffs were represented by George S. Ryan, of Boston, who is also counsel for the plaintiffs in the Morse and Rothenberg actions in Massachusetts, the Waldo Theatre Corporation suit in Portland, Maine, and the Momand cases in Oklahoma. The defendant distributors were represented by John F. Caskey, of New York; Perkins, Weeks and Hutchins of Waterville, Maine; and Anthony M. Brayton of Boston; the defendant exhibitors were represented by Abraham M. Rudman and Oscar Fellows of Bangor.

The reports in these cases present a number of features of interest and importance to independent exhibitors, particularly to those operating in competition with circuits. And they exemplify the sordid selfishness of a circuit, its abuse of "buying power," the yielding by great distributors to the exercise of that power, and the consequences that may ensue from unlawful attempts to put exhibitors out of business and thereby eliminate competition.

The Complaints

Summarily speaking, the complaints alleged that the defendants entered into a combination and conspiracy to restrain and to monopolize interstate trade and commerce in motion picture films, particularly the right to contract for and to exhibit films in the cities and towns where the defendant exhibitors and the other members of the Graphic Circuit were operating theatres; and that the purpose of the conspiracy was to suppress and destroy competition, to force the competitors out of business, and to establish and maintain a monopoly by the defendant exhibitors in those towns. The means to effectuate the conspiracy were alleged to be

chiefly the making of contracts with the defendant distributors, which granted priority or exclusiveness in playing dates, and the refusal by the distributors to license the exhibition of their films in the theatres of the competitors.

The complaints alleged also that the defendant exhibitors had monopolized or attempted to monopolize or combined and conspired to monopolize both the right to contract for licenses to exhibit films and the actual exhibition of them in those towns in the States of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont, where theatres operated or controlled by units of the Graphic Circuit were located; that they attempted and conspired to accomplish their purpose by means of selective contracts with the defendant distributors and other distributors, with a stipulation for either an exclusive license, or a license for the exclusive first run of the films, and by means of overbuying.

Because of the charge of a conspiracy covering the three States, the Special Master heard evidence relating not only to the occurrences in Millinocket and Bridgton, but also to the occurrences in Middlebury, Vermont, where Kenneth M. Gorham, who also has an anti-trust action pending in the United States District Court for the District of Vermont, was operating a theatre in competition with the Graphic Circuit.

Besides making specific findings of combination and conspiracy, and of monopolizing interstate commerce, the Special Master pointed out many acts and practices of the defendant exhibitors, outside of the normal course of competition, which were committed and engaged in by them for the purpose of eliminating and restricting competition by other theatre operators. He made findings also of monopolizing and conspiracy by means of overbuying of product, and by means of selective and exclusive contracts, which findings will be discussed at length and some portions quoted further on in this article.

Millett of Bridgton, Maine

According to the findings of the Special Master, Clarence F. Millett, one of the plaintiffs, had been operating a theatre in Bridgton, a town in the southern part of Maine, having fewer than 3,000 inhabitants. He had begun to operate in 1930, and had gradually increased his days of operation from two or three days a week to six days a week. In 1935 the chief defendant exhibitor, Samuel Kurson, who was the head of the Graphic Circuit, comprising about 11 or 12 theatres in northern New England, bought the building in which Millett's theatre was located and immediately ejected Millett from the building. Thereupon, with the assistance of other residents of the town, Millett proceeded to construct a new theatre, which was far superior in all respects to the other house.

At the time the defendant Samuel Kurson purchased the theatre-building, he believed that the population of the town was too small for the profitable operation of two theatres and that he could be successful only if Millett were

(Continued on last page)

"His Butler's Sister" with Deanna Durbin, Franchot Tone and Pat O'Brien

(Universal, November 26; time, 93 min.)

A tuneful, merry romantic comedy; it should prove entertaining to most audiences, particularly the Deanna Durbin fans. The story, which is a variation of the "Cinderella" theme, is nothing to get excited about, but it serves well as a means of putting over the comedy and Deanna Durbin's delightful singing. Deanna, now grown to full womanhood, is so completely charming and acts with such ease that, despite the shortcomings of the story, one is kept entertained. She sings so effectively that one wants to hear more. A few of the situations will arouse hearty laughter, such as the one where Deanna, posing as a maid, keeps a "dead pan" look on her face while serving the guests. The romance is appealing:—

Believing that Pat O'Brien, her half-brother, was a wealthy man, Deanna Durbin leaves her home in Indiana to visit him in New York, hoping that he will help her to become a famous singer. She goes to the Park Avenue address given to her by O'Brien, only to learn that he is a butler for Franchot Tone, a noted composer. O'Brien insists that she return home, but Deanna, sensing an opportunity to sing for Tone, ignores his wishes and masquerades as the new maid. Her presence in the building causes five butlers (Akim Tamiroff, Alan Mowbray, Sig Arno, Frank Jenks, and Hans Conried) to vie for her favor. Deanna makes numerous attempts to surprise Tone with her singing, but other matters always seem to take up his attention. At the suggestion of Evelyn Ankers, his socialite fiancée, Tone decides to give up music temporarily, and to take a vacation. O'Brien, to rid himself of Deanna, suggests to Tone that her services would no longer be required. Tone dismisses her in friendly fashion. She accepts the dismissal with good grace and, after telling him that she loved his songs, pleads with him to continue writing music. Intrigued by her charm, Tone changes his vacation plans and follows her to a Russian restaurant where she had gone to help Tamiroff celebrate his birthday. The end of the party finds them deeply in love with each other. In the belief that Tone's love for Deanna was only a passing fancy, O'Brien breaks up the romance by informing Tone that Deanna was being nice to him because of her singing ambitions. Peeved, Tone decides to take his vacation. Deanna, heartbroken, makes up her mind to return to Indiana. Realizing that their love was genuine, O'Brien, with the aid of the other butlers, manages to bring them together at a Butler's Ball, where they fall into each other's arms.

Samuel Hoffenstein and Bett Reinhardt wrote the screen play, Felix Jackson produced it, and Frank Borzage directed it. Frank Shaw was the associate producer. The cast includes Walter Catlett, Elsa Jansen and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Underdog" with Barton MacLane, Jan Wiley and Bobby Larson

(PRC, October 10; time, 65 min.)

Mediocre program fare. The main part of the story, which deals with a small boy and the dog he loves, has its appealing moments, but the introduction of numerous by-plots that fail to strike a realistic note diminishes one's interest in the proceedings. The basis of the story, although familiar, is not bad, but it has been done in such an uninteresting and artificial way that it tires one. At best, it may do as matinee entertainment for the younger element. Barton MacLane struggles with a part that is wholly unsuited to him. The others in the cast are handicapped by the weak material:—

After having suffered many privations and hardships on a farm, Barton MacLane takes his family to a congested city district where he and his wife (Jan Wiley) find defense

jobs. Jan becomes enthusiastic about her work, but MacLane is discontented and wants to return to the farm. Bobby Larson, their young son, has troubles of his own. A neighborhood gang of boys, led by Conrad Binyon, makes life miserable for him. He longs for their friendship, but they refuse to make him a member of their group, because he did not have a relative serving in the armed forces. Bobby's only companion was his dog, Hobo. From a soldier, the lad learns of the Dogs for Defense movement. He registers Hobo with the Army. During training, the dog refuses to hurdle the fire and water barriers. Hobo is rejected and returned to Bobby. The gang taunts the boy, telling him that Hobo is a coward. Meanwhile MacLane secures a position as night watchman at a waterfront warehouse through the efforts of Kenneth Harlan, a local saloon-keeper, who was a secret Nazi agent. Harlan visits MacLane, while he is on duty, and gives him a drink that puts him to sleep. Together with his henchmen, Harlan prepares to blow up the warehouse. Bobby, who had decided to pay his father a visit, takes his old rifle and goes to the warehouse, accompanied by his dog. He arrives just as Harlan is set to ignite the explosives. Bobby manages to shoot down a few saboteurs before the explosion fells him, trapping him in the burning building. Hobo, overcoming his fear of fire, dashes through the flames and guides the firemen to his young master. Harlan and his henchmen are overpowered and captured. To Bobby's pride and delight, Hobo is decorated by the army for bravery.

Ben Lithman wrote the screen play, Max Alexander produced it, and William Nigh directed it. The cast includes Charlotte Wynters and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"The Sultan's Daughter" with Ann Corio, Charles Butterworth and Edward Norris

(Monogram, December 31; time, 64 min.)

This comedy with music should satisfy as a supporting feature. Although the story is completely nonsensical, and it is developed without one new twist, the action is fast and at times amusing. The redeeming features are the musical interpolations by Freddy Fisher and his orchestra, the harem dance ensembles, and the clowning of Tim and Irene Ryan, whose antics provoke considerable laughter. Ann Corio's name may mean something at the box-office, but she does little to distinguish herself. Charles Butterworth is his usual droll self:—

In need of money, Charles Butterworth, Sultan of Arabab, asks Ann Corio, his daughter, to sell her oil lands to Jack LaRue, a German agent. Ann refuses, insisting that the lands be sold to Americans. Together with Irene Ryan, her lady-in-waiting, Ann visits the village incognito, and there meets Tim Ryan and Edward Norris, two fast-talking Americans. Fortunio Bonanova, the Sultan's aide, approaches the boys and offers them a huge sum of money if they will induce Ann to sell the lands to them. Unaware that Bonanova was in league with LaRue, the boys agree. They visit the palace and pose as wealthy Americans. Ann falls in love with Norris, and Irene with Tim. Ann, however, sees through their scheme, and the boys confess that Bonanova had instigated the plot. His plans foiled, Bonanova kidnaps Butterworth, imprisons the boys, and announces that he will marry Ann. Arranging with Irene to impersonate her, Ann manages to evade her guards and to free the boys. Together, they go to a village cafe where they find and rescue Butterworth. All return to the palace in time to arrest Bonanova as a traitor, and to prevent him from marrying Irene.

M. M. Raison and Tim Ryan wrote the screen play, Philip N. Krasne produced it, and Arthur Dreifuss directed it. James S. Burket and Eric W. Spitz are the associate producers.

Morally suitable for all.

"Footlight Glamour" with Arthur Lake and Penny Singleton

(Columbia, September 30; time, 70 min.)

This program comedy is up to the standard of the previous Blondie pictures; it should please the followers of the series, for the main characters go through all their well-known antics, provoking considerable laughter in many situations. This time the "Bumstead's" difficulties are caused by "Blondie's" interest in a little theatre group, and her desire to become a glamorous actress. Despite the silliness of the plot, at times it is quite amusing. As in the other pictures, the predicaments the "Bumstead's" get themselves into turn out to benefit them:—

Having built a number of new homes in a remote part of town, Jonathan Hale finds that there is little likelihood that they can be sold; a defense plant was to have been built nearby, but the Government had changed its plans. Hale sees a way out of his difficulties when Thurston Hall, a tool manufacturer and old college friend visits him. Hall had come to town to keep his stage-struck daughter (Ann Savage) away from Raphael Storm, director of a little theatre group. Hale induces the manufacturer to take a brief vacation with him, hoping to talk him into building a defense plant near the new homes. He assigns Arthur Lake to take care of Ann during their absence. Lake takes Ann to his home, where the stage-struck girl loses no time persuading Penny Singleton, Lake's wife, to help her produce a new play she had written. When Lake hears of the plan he becomes infuriated, but he cools down on learning that his boss' wife (Grayce Hayle) was one of the play's sponsors. To make matters worse, Ann invites Storm to come to town and direct the play. When Hale telephones Lake to advise him of his homecoming, he learns to his dismay of what had occurred. Fearful lest Hall learn the truth and cancel the construction deal, Hale attempts to keep the manufacturer away from town. His efforts are unsuccessful, and Hall storms into the theatre on the night of the first performance. Angry, he calls off the deal. Ann and Storm dash out of the theatre, planning to elope. Lake, believing that it was Penny, not Ann, who had run off with Storm, follows them to his home. There, Storm privately asks Lake not to interfere, and tells him of his hopes of obtaining some of Hall's money by marrying Ann. Storm's words are overheard by Ann, who breaks the engagement. Pleased, Hall agrees to build the new plant. Hale grants Lake a bonus.

Karen DeWolfe and Connie Lee wrote the screen play, and Frank Strayer produced and directed it. The cast includes Larry Simms, Irving Bacon, Marjorie Ann Mutchie and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Madame Curie" with Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon

(MGM, no release date set; time, 124 min.)

Excellent entertainment! Splendidly produced, directed, and acted, this is a highly dramatic and absorbing account of the lives of Marie and Pierre Curie, brilliant scientists, who sacrificed their own health and happiness so that mankind might benefit from their discovery of radium. Their deep and devoted love for each other, and their mutual respect for each other's scientific talents, wins for them the spectator's sympathy at the very beginning and holds it until the end. It is the sort of entertainment that will be enjoyed by all, for the story is presented with deep understanding and human appeal, and is set against an interesting background. Audiences will be fascinated by the methods that were employed in their search for and discovery of radium. One is touched deeply by the hardships and setbacks they experience until their labors are rewarded. As Marie and Pierre Curie, Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon live

the parts, and make of them warm, humane, and lovable persons, whose unbounded faith in what they were doing is a source of inspiration. The supporting cast is excellent. From a production standpoint, the film is outstanding, for not one detail has been missed in reproducing the styles and settings of the period during which the story unfolds. The popularity of Miss Garson and Pidgeon as a team, as well as the excellence of the production itself, should make "Madame Curie" an outstanding box-office success:—

Marie Sklodowska (Greer Garson), a penniless Polish student, is befriended by Professor Perot (Albert Baserman), who gives her an opportunity to earn some money studying steel magnetism. Perot arranges with Professor Pierre Curie, a brilliant but shy scientist, to share his laboratory with Marie, so that she can carry on her experiments. Pierre comes to admire Marie's brilliant deductions, and soon falls in love with her. One day they are invited by Dr. Henri Becquerel (Reginald Owen) to observe a piece of pitchblende, which, placed on a photographic plate, with a key between them, had left the imprint of the key on the plot. Too absorbed in their own work, Marie and Pierre do not investigate the mystery. Marie passes her examination at the university and decides to return to her native Poland to teach. Pierre, disturbed at the thought of her leaving him, proposes marriage. Following their honeymoon, Marie determines to solve the mystery of the pitchblende. After almost five years of intense study, she discovers the miracle of radium. Pierre and Marie seek aid to carry on their experiments and, despite the opposition of some scientists, obtain from the university the use of an old shed, cold and drafty, with a leaky roof. For years they struggle against extreme hardships and bitter disappointments, treating tons of pitchblende. Eventually their efforts are rewarded by the production of a single decigram of radium. Acclaimed by the world, they seclude themselves in the country for a well-earned vacation with their two children. On the day they are to be honored by the university, Pierre loses his life in a street accident. Marie, heartbroken, devotes herself to the study of radium.

Paul Osborn and Paul H. Rameau wrote the screen play, based on the book "Madame Curie" by Eve Curie. Sidney Franklin produced it, and Mervyn LeRoy directed it. The cast includes Margaret O'Brien, Dame Mae Witty, Henry Travers, Robert Walker, Victor Francen, C. Aubrey Smith, Van Johnson and many others.

Morally suitable for all.

AMAZING FACTS AND FINDINGS

(Continued from back page)

"During the construction of the Millinocket Theatre the defendant Samuel Kurson, in a conversation with the managing officer of Millinocket Theatre, Inc., threatened to turn the theatre into a garage."

The Special Master found that in 1937, prior to the construction of this theatre, the defendant exhibitors had tried to induce Fox to break its contract for the supply of news reels to an independent operator in that town, and had protested to Loew's against the supply of news to him. During the season 1937-38, the defendant exhibitors cut their admission prices to an uneconomical and unprofitable level, for the purpose of injuring the operator of that theatre and driving him out of business. They ran bargain days, and used two-for-ones.

"The defendant exhibitors knew that the cut-price policy was unprofitable, and that less gross receipts were obtained at such prices than would have been secured at reasonably higher prices."

Early in 1940, because of the lack of suitable product, the operator of the other independent theatre was forced to cease operating.

(To be continued next week)

unable to continue in business. Immediately after Kurson began to operate, he issued a large number of passes, with a service charge of ten cents, the effect of which was to cut the established admission price of his theatre. The defendant exhibitors caused a number of small boys to check Millett's theatre in an offensive and noisy manner, and to create disturbances in the theatre by talking and laughing aloud and by throwing articles upon the stage and at the screen. Some of these boys stood in the lobby of Millett's theatre and passed out flyers advertising the Kurson house. When Millett refused to admit the boys to his theatre, the manager of the Kurson house tried to compel him to do so by threats of calling the sheriff.

On various occasions the Graphic Circuit reduced its price of admission to an unprofitable level, for the purpose of injuring Millett. They operated "Chum Nite," a two-for-one, and had numerous bargain days. When Millett began to operate Bank Night, the defendant exhibitors put into their house a similar plan. They published misleading advertisements in the local newspaper, implying that the films used by Millett were not first run, but second run. They even attempted to purchase a mortgage upon the real estate on which Millett's theatre was located.

The Special Master found that:

"During the season 1935-36 and thereafter, the defendant exhibitors attempted to secure licenses for the exhibition of all the feature films of the major distributors, knowing that all such films were not required for the successful operation of the Mayfair Theatre and that Millett could not operate successfully without an adequate supply of said films."

The Special Master found also that the defendant exhibitors had interfered with contracts made by Millett with Fox, which was not a defendant in that action, and had prevented him from exhibiting some of the Fox features that had already been licensed, booked and confirmed.

Gorham of Middlebury, Vermont

In 1936 the defendant Samuel Kurson commenced the erection of a theatre in Middlebury, Vermont, in competition with an independent exhibitor operating there in the Town Hall. "It was then the defendant's belief that the population of the town was inadequate for the profitable operation of two theatres. He did not want competition in the town."* Because of the size of his circuit, Kurson had the well-founded belief that he would be able to secure whatever major product he desired, and that he would be able to operate profitably, irrespective of what might happen to his competitor. In March, 1937, Kurson bought the business and equipment and contracts of the independent exhibitor, and "attained a substantial monopoly of the right to contract for and exhibit motion picture films" in that town.

Middlebury had a permanent population of about 2,000, or fewer, which was increased by the students of Middlebury College while the college was in session.

In May, 1937, at the request of the selectmen of the town, Gorham commenced to operate a theatre in the Town Hall. From the beginning "the defendant exhibitors had formed an intention to interfere with his operation in whatever manner might be at any time feasible, and to minimize and suppress his competition."

During the early summer of 1937, the defendant Samuel Kurson brought actions against Columbia and Universal, with which Gorham had contracted for a supply of films, but did not prosecute either of these actions to final judgment.

"He brought these actions maliciously and without probable cause, in order to injure, annoy and oppress his competitor, to prevent him from exhibiting the films attached, and to coerce those distributors into refusing to supply

films to him. He attempted to prevent Columbia from contracting with Gorham, and interfered with the performance of valid contracts between Gorham and Columbia and Universal, well knowing that Gorham was then dependent almost entirely upon those companies for his supply of first run major films."

The defendant Samuel Kurson, by his attorney, threatened Paramount with legal action in the event any of its pictures were exhibited in Gorham's theatre.

"About two or three months after Gorham commenced operations, Kenneth Kurson called upon him at his theatre. In the course of the conversation which ensued Kurson stated that there was not room for two theatres in Middlebury and that the Campus (Kurson's theatre) was going to stay; that he had thought Gorham would be able to remain in business only about three weeks; and that Gorham had done a whole lot better job than they expected. He said there were three things that Graphic Circuit could do: they had thousands of flyers printed, advertising a 15 cent admission at the Campus Theatre which they intended to send all over the county; second, they could pay two or three times as much for the lease of the Town Hall Theatre as Gorham was paying and secure control of it; and, third, if neither of those methods succeeded they could take away from Gorham all his product. He added that 'We fellows are a crooked bunch,' but that the producers, who were rotten and crooked, made them that way. He told Gorham to give them the first chance to buy when he got ready to sell. He also informed Gorham that they had bought Universal product for their entire chain of theatres, and that he would soon be in a bad way for product."

During that week the defendants' theatre cut its admission price from 35 cents to 15 cents for adults, and operated on that policy for a period of one or two weeks. The defendants' employees tore down Gorham's advertising signs. The defendants used "Cash Night," Grocery Nite, Chum Nite, to divert patronage from Gorham's theatre.

At a town meeting, the attorney for the defendant exhibitors offered on their behalf to pay twice as much as Gorham was paying for his lease. "The purpose of these offers to secure a lease of the theatre was to drive Gorham out of business, and thereby eliminate his competition."

"About May or June, 1938, the defendant Newell B. Kurson called upon Gorham at his theatre. He stated that he did not understand how Gorham was getting along with what product he had; that the defendant exhibitors had already taken Universal away from him and were about to take Columbia away, and that at that minute in Bangor three representatives of Paramount were trying to sell his father Paramount pictures. 'When we get those, I wonder what you are going to do.' Kurson suggested that Gorham go to the telephone and ask to speak to the Paramount branch manager at the Graphic office in Bangor, and stated that if that company should 'pull down on their hijacking prices, we will probably buy their product. If we want it, we can get it. Any product that we want, we can get; don't forget that.' At the conclusion of the conversation Kurson suggested that if Gorham should 'find the going pretty tough' and wanted to sell his theatre, he should give him the first chance to buy it.

"The conversation was a renewal of the earlier threat by Kenneth Kurson to put Gorham out of business. These threats were made in order to coerce him into selling his theatre and business to the defendant exhibitors, and thereby eliminating his competition."

Millinocket Theatre

Millinocket Theatre, Inc., was organized in the summer of 1938, and, in September of that year, started to operate a newly constructed theatre in Millinocket. There were then two other theatres in the town, one of which was operated by the Graphic Circuit. The town had a population of about 6,200.

(Continued on inside page)

*EDITOR'S NOTE: All matter within quotation marks represents direct quotations from the Special Master's reports.

HARRISON'S REPORTS

Vol. XXV

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RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR FEATURES

Columbia Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

1942-43

4020 Footlight Glamour—Singleton-Lake.....Sept. 30

1943-44

5201 Hail to the Rangers—Starrett (57 m.).....Sept. 16

5031 Doughboys in Ireland—Baker-Donnell.....Oct. 7

5003 Sahara—Bogart.....Oct. 14

5034 The Chance of a Lifetime—Morris.....Oct. 26

5016 Is Everybody Happy?—Ted Lewis.....Oct. 28

5202 Silver City Raiders—Hayden (55 m.).....Nov. 4

Return of the Vampire—Lugosi.....Nov. 11

There's Something About a Soldier—

Keyes-Neal.....Nov. 30

The Heat's On—West-Moore.....Dec. 2

Crime Doctor—Baxter-Hobart.....Dec. 9

Klondike Kate—Savage-Neal.....Dec. 16

Swing Out the Blues—Haymes-Merrick.....Dec. 23

Cowboy in the Clouds—Starrett.....Dec. 23

What a Woman!—Russell-Aherne.....Dec. 28

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Features

(1540 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

(Block 1—release dates are tentative)

401 Salute to the Marines—Beery.....September

402 Above Suspicion—Crawford-Montgomery.....September

403 I Dood It—Skelton-Powell.....September

404 Swing Shift Maisie—Sothorn-Craig.....October

405 Best Foot Forward—Ball-Gaxton.....October

406 Adventures of Tartu—Donat.....October

407 Dr. Gillespie's Criminal Case—Barrymore.....November

408 Young Ideas—Astor-Marshall.....November

409 Girl Crazy—Garland-Rooney.....November

410 Lassie Come Home—McDowell-Crisp.....December

411 The Man from Down Under—Laughton.....December

412 Whistling in Brooklyn—Red Skelton.....December

Monogram Features

(630 Ninth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

361 Death Valley Rangers—Trail Blazers (56 m.).....Dec. 3

310 Mr. Muggs Steps Out—East Side Kids.....Dec. 10

304 Women in Bondage—Patrick-Kelly.....Dec. 24

The Sultan's Daughter—Corio-Butterworth.....Dec. 31

315 Sweethearts of the U.S.A.—Merkel-Novis.....Jan. 7

Charlie Chan in the Secret Service—Toler.....Jan. 17

Where Are Your Children—Cooper-Morison.....Jan. 24

301 Lady, Let's Dance—Belita-Ellison.....Jan. 31

Paramount Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

Block 1

4301 Let's Face It—Hope-Hutton.....not set

4302 The Good Fellows—Kellaway-Walker.....not set

4303 True To Life—Martin-Powell-Moore.....not set

4304 Tornado—Morris-Kelly.....not set

4305 Hostages—Rainer-Bendix.....not set

Block 2

4306 Henry Aldrich Haunts a House—Lydon.....not set

4307 Riding High—Lamour-Powell-Moore.....not set

4308 Minesweeper—Arlen-Parker.....not set

4309 No Time For Love—Colbert-MacMurray.....not set

Special

4331 The City that Stopped Hitler.....not set

Producers Releasing Corp. Features

(1501 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

1942-43

- 368 Lone Rider No. 6—Livingston (59 m.).....Sept. 30
 316 The Underdog—MacLane-Wynters (re.)....Oct. 17
 315 Suspected Persons—Clifford Evans (re.)....Nov. 29
 (End of 1942-43 Season)

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

- 405 Submarine Alert—Litel-BaxterJuly 20
 401 Isle of Forgotten Sins—Carradine.....Aug. 15
 411 Danger! Women at Work—Kelly-Brian.....Aug. 23
 459 Blazing Frontier—Crabbe (59 m.).....Sept. 1
 406 Tiger Fangs—Buck-DuprezSept. 10
 412 Girl from Monterey—Armida-Kennedy (re.)..Oct. 4
 451 Texas Rangers No. 1—Newill-O'Brien (60m.)..Oct. 26
 460 The Devil Riders—Crabbe (58 m.).....Nov. 5
 452 Texas Rangers No. 2—Newill-O'Brien.....Nov. 20
 402 Harvest Melody—Lane-DownsNov. 22
 461 The Drifter—CrabbeDec. 20

Republic Features

(1790 Broadway, New York, N. Y.)

1942-43

- 257 The Man from Music Mountain—Roy Rogers
 (71 m.)Oct. 30
 2308 Tumbling Tumbleweeds—Autry (reissue)...Dec. 1
 (More to come)

1943-44

- 361 Fugitive from Sonora—Barry (55 m.).....July 1
 301 The Saint Meets the Tiger—Sinclair.....July 29
 362 Black Hills Express—Barry (55 m.).....Aug. 15
 302 Hoosier-Holiday—Evans-Hoosier Hotshots..Sept. 13
 351 Beyond the Last Frontier—Dew Burnette
 (55 m.)Sept. 18
 375 Death Valley Manhunt—Elliott (55 m.)....Sept. 25
 363 Man from the Rio Grande—Barry (55 m.)...Oct. 18
 303 Here Comes Elmer—Al Pearce.....Nov. 15
 306 Deerslayer—Kellogg-ParkerNov. 22
 304 Mystery Broadcast—Albertson-TerryNov. 23
 305 Drums of Fu Manchu—Brandon-Boyle....Nov. 27

RKO Features

(1270 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

No national release dates on features

Block 1

- 401 The Fallen Sparrow—Garfield-O'Hara.....
 402 Adventures of a Rookie—Carney-Brown.....
 403 The Seventh Victim—Tom Conway.....
 404 So This is Washington—Lum & Abner.....
 405 A Lady Takes a Chance—Arthur-Wayne.....

Block 2

- 406 The Iron Major—O'Brien-Warwick.....
 407 Gangway for Tomorrow—Margo-Ryan.....
 408 Government Girl—DeHavilland-Tufts
 409 Gildersleeve on Broadway—Harold Peary.....
 410 The Falcon and the Co-Eds—Tom Conway.....
 Special

- 451 The North Star—Baxter-Andrews.....

Twentieth Century-Fox Features

(444 W. 56th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 401 Bomber's Moon—Montgomery-Annabella ...Aug. 6
 402 Heaven Can Wait—Ameche-Tierney.....Aug. 13
 403 Holy Matrimony—Fields-WoolleyAug. 27
 404 Claudia—Young-McGuireSept. 3
 405 Wintertime—Henie-OakieSept. 17
 408 Sweet Rosie O'Grady—Grable-Young.....Oct. 1
 409 Paris After Dark—Sanders-Marshall.....Oct. 15

- 406 In Old Chicago—Power-Faye (reissue)
 (94 m.)Oct. 29
 407 Banjo On My Knee—Stanwyck-McCrea (reissue)
 (95 m.)Oct. 29
 412 Guadalcanal Diary—Foster-BendixNov. 5
 414 The Battle of Russia—Documentary (80 m.)..Nov. 5
 413 The Dancing Masters—Laurel-HardyNov. 19
 410 The Rains Came—Loy-Power (reissue) (95m)..Nov. 26
 411 Under Two Flags—Colman-Colbert (reissue)
 (99 m.)Nov. 26
 415 Happy Land—Ameche-DecDec. 3
 416 The Gang's All Here—Faye-Miranda.....Dec. 24
 (Note: "Call of the Wild," a reissue, released Sept. 17,
 has been withdrawn.)

United Artists Features

(729 Seventh Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- Bar 20—Hopalong (54 m.)Oct. 1
 The Woman of the Town (formerly "The Gun-
 master")—Trevor-DekkerOct. 29

Universal Features

(1250 Sixth Ave., New York, N. Y.)

- 8017 Fired Wife—Allbritton-PaigeSept. 3
 8022 The Strange Death of Adolph Hitler—
 Sondergaard-DonathSept. 10
 8028 Larceny With Music—Jones-CarlisleSept. 10
 8009 Top Man—O'Connor-FosterSept. 17
 8024 Sherlock Holmes Faces Death—
 Rathbone-BruceSept. 17
 8023 Always a Bridesmaid—Knowles-McDonald..Sept. 24
 8081 Arizona Trail—Tex Ritter (57 m.).....Sept. 24
 8007 Corvette K-225—Randolph ScottOct. 1
 8005 Crazy House—Olsen & Johnson.....Oct. 8
 8035 Hi' Ya' Sailor—Woods-Knox.....Oct. 15
 8033 You're a Lucky Fellow, Mr. Smith—
 Jones-AnkersOct. 22
 8062 Flesh and Fantasy—All Star.....Oct. 29
 8013 Son of Dracula—Paige-AllbrittonNov. 5
 8082 Frontier Law—Tex RitterNov. 5
 8038 The Mad Ghoul—Ankers-BruceNov. 12
 8030 Never a Dull Moment—Ritz Bros.Nov. 19
 8004 His Butler's Sister—Durbin-ToneNov. 26
 8042 So's Your Uncle—Knox-WoodsDec. 3
 Calling Dr. Death—Chaney-Morison.....Dec. 10
 8041 She's For Me—Bruce-McDonaldDec. 17
 Moonlight in Vermont—Gloria JeanDec. 24
 Gung Ho—Randolph ScottDec. 31

Warner-First National Features

(321 W. 44th St., New York, N. Y.)

- 301 Watch on the Rhine—Lukas-Davis.....Sept. 4
 330 The Oklahoma Kid—Bogart-Cagney (reissue)
 (80 m.)Sept. 11
 302 Murder on the Waterfront—Loder.....Sept. 18
 303 Thank Your Lucky Stars—All star.....Sept. 25
 331 Song of the Saddle—Foran (reissue) (59 m.)..Oct. 2
 332 Prairie Thunder—Foran (reissue) (55 m.)...Oct. 2
 333 The Cherokee Strip—Foran (reissue) (59 m.)..Oct. 2
 334 Empty Holsters—Foran (reissue) (62 m.)....Oct. 2
 335 Guns of the Pecos—Foran (reissue) (56 m.)...Oct. 2
 336 Land Beyond the Law—Foran (reissue) (55m)..Oct. 2
 304 Adventure in Iraq—Ford-Loder.....Oct. 9
 305 Princess O'Rourke—DeHavilland-Cummings..Oct. 23
 306 Find the Blackmailer—Cowan-Emerson.....Nov. 6
 307 Northern Pursuit—Flynn-Bishop.....Nov. 13
 308 Old Acquaintance—Davis-HopkinsNov. 27
 327 Crime School—Bogart (reissue) (86 m.)....Dec. 4
 328 Girls on Probation—Reagan (reissue) (63 m)..Dec. 4

SHORT SUBJECT RELEASE SCHEDULE**Columbia—One Reel**

5852	Screen Snapshots No. 2 (10 m.)	Sept. 17
5653	Community Sings No. 3 (10 m.)	Sept. 24
5751	Room and Bored—Fox & Crow (7 m.)	Sept. 30
5802	Cue Wizards—Sports (10 m.)	Sept. 30
5902	Babies By Bannister—Panoramic (8½ m.)	Oct. 1
5701	Nursery Crimes—Phantasies (7 m.)	Oct. 8
5952	Film-Vodvil No. 2 (10 m.)	Oct. 8
5853	Screen Snapshots No. 3 (10 m.)	Oct. 15
5501	The Rocky Road to Ruin—Color Rhap. (8 m.) (re.)	Oct. 22
5654	Community Sings No. 4 (8 m.)	Oct. 22
5803	Champ of Champions—Sports (10 m.)	Oct. 29
5702	The Cocky Bantam—Phantasies (6½ m.)	Nov. 12
5502	Imagination—Col. Rhap. (re.) (8 m.)	Nov. 19
5953	Film-Vodvil No. 3 (11 m.)	Nov. 19
5854	Screen Snapshots No. 4 (9 m.)	Nov. 19
5752	Way Down Yonder in the Corn— Fox & Crow	Nov. 25
5655	Community Sings No. 5	Nov. 25
5804	Ten Pin Aces—Sports	Nov. 26
5703	The Playful Pest—Phantasies	Dec. 3
5855	Screen Snapshots No. 5	Dec. 17
5656	Community Sings No. 6	Dec. 24
5503	The Herring Murder Mystery—Col. Rhap.	Dec. 30
5704	Polly Wants a Doctor—Phantasies	Jan. 6
5601	Amoozin' But Confoozin'—Li'l Abner	Jan. 28

Columbia—Two Reels

5428	Garden of Eatin'—Summerville (16 m.)	Oct. 22
5134	The Doom of the Rising Sun—Batman No. 15 (20 m.)	Oct. 22
5429	You Dear Boy—Vera Vague (18 m.)	Nov. 4
5403	Phony Express—Stooges (17 m.)	Nov. 18
5430	He Was Only Feudin'—Clyde (16 m.)	Dec. 3
5410	Who's Hugh?—Herbert	Dec. 17
5404	A Gem of a Jam—Stooges	Dec. 30

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—One Reel**1942-43**

C-497	Little Miss Pinkerton—Our Gang (11 m.)	Sept. 18
S-471	Fixin' Tricks—Pete Smith (9 m.)	Sept. 18
S-472	Football Thrills of 1942—Pete Smith (9 m.)	Sept. 25
T-422	Over the Andes—Traveltalk (9 m.)	Sept. 25
W-452	War Dogs—Cartoon (8 m.)	Oct. 9
W-453	The Stork's Holiday—Cartoon (8 m.)	Oct. 23
K-488	Storm—Passing Parade (8 m.)	Oct. 23
C-498	Three Smart Guys—Our Gang (11 m.)	Oct. 23
K-489	To My Unborn Son—Passing Parade (9 m.)	Oct. 30
S-473	Tips on Trips—Pete Smith (9 m.)	Nov. 13
K-490	This Is Tomorrow—Passing Parade	Nov. 27
W-454	What's Buzzin' Buzzard—Cartoon	Nov. 27

*(More to come)***Beginning of 1943-44 Season**

T-511	Through the Colorado Rockies—Traveltalk (10 m.)	Oct. 23
T-512	Grand Canyon, Pride of Creation—Traveltalk (9 m.)	Nov. 27

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer—Two Reels

A-402	Heavenly Music—Special (22 m.)	May 1
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Paramount—One Reel

U3-1	Jasper Goes Fishing—Mad. Mod. (8 m.)	Oct. 8
J3-1	Popular Science No. 1—(10 m.)	Oct. 15
R3-1	Mermaids on Parade—Spotlight (9 m.)	Oct. 22
L3-1	Unusual Occupations No. 1	Nov. 12
R3-2	Ozark Sportsmen—Spotlight (9 m.)	Nov. 19
E3-1	Her Honor the Mare—Popeye	Nov. 26
P3-1	No Mutton for Nuttin'—Noveltoons	Nov. 26
U3-2	Good Night Rusty—Mad. Mod. (7 m.)	Dec. 3
J3-2	Popular Science No. 2	Dec. 10
R3-3	G. I. Fun—Spotlight (9 m.)	Dec. 24
D3-1	Eggs Don't Bounce—Little Lulu	Dec. 24
E3-2	Marry-Go-Round—Popeye	Dec. 31

Paramount—Two Reels

FF3-1	Mardi Gras—Musical Parade (19 m.)	Oct. 1
FF3-2	Caribbean Romance—Mus. Parade (20 m.)	Dec. 17

RKO—One Reel**1942-43**

34204	Oil is Blood—Victory Special (8 m.)	Sept. 23
34108	Figaro and Cleo—Disney (8 m.)	Oct. 15
34109	The Old Army Game—Disney (7 m.)	Nov. 5
34110	Home Defense—Disney (8 m.)	Nov. 26

Beginning of 1943-44 Season

44201	Flicker Flashbacks No. 1 (9 m.)	Sept. 3
44301	Field Trial Champions—Sportscope (9 m.)	Sept. 10
44202	Flicker Flashbacks No. 2 (9 m.)	Oct. 1
44302	Joe Kirkwood—Sportscope (9 m.)	Oct. 8
44203	Flicker Flashbacks No. 3 (9 m.)	Oct. 29

RKO—Two Reels**1942-43**

33111	Arctic Passage—This is America (20 m.)	Aug. 27
33112	Age of Flight—This is America (16 m.)	Sept. 24
33113	Children of Mars—This is America (19 m.)	Oct. 22

*(End of 1942-43 Season)***Beginning of 1943-44 Season**

43701	Seeing Nellie Home—Leon Errol (17 m.)	Sept. 3
43201	Harris in the Spring—Head. Rev. (19 m.)	Sept. 10
43401	Not on My Account—E. Kennedy (17 m.)	Sept. 17
43202	Rhythm on the Rampage—Head. Rev. (18 m.)	Oct. 8
43702	Cutie on Duty—Leon Errol (18 m.)	Oct. 29
43203	Romancing Along—Head Rev. (21 m.)	Nov. 5
43402	Unlucky Dog—Edgar Kennedy (15 m.)	Nov. 12
43703	Wedtime Stories—Leon Errol (17½ m.)	Dec. 24

Twentieth Century-Fox—One Reel

4507	Yokel Duck Makes Good—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Nov. 26
4156	Kingdom of Treasure—Magic Carpet (9 m.)	Dec. 3
4302	Champions Carry On—Sports (9 m.)	Dec. 10
4508	The Hopeful Donkey—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Dec. 17
4154	A Volcano is Born—Magic Carpet (9 m.)	Dec. 24
4509	The Butcher of Seville—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Jan. 7
4253	Leathernecks on Parade—Adventure (9 m.)	Jan. 14
4510	The Helicopter—Terrytoon (7 m.)	Jan. 21

Twentieth Century-Fox—Two Reels

Vol. 10 No. 1	Airways to Peace—March of Time (17 m.) (re.)	Sept. 10
Vol. 10 No. 2	Europe's Crossroads—March of Time (18 m.)	Oct. 8
Vol. 10 No. 3	Youth in Crisis—March of Time (18 m.)	Nov. 5

Universal—One Reel

8372 Farmer Gene Sarazen—Per. Odd. (9 m.)...Oct. 25
 8373 Fannie Hurst & Her Pets—Per. Odd. (9 m.)...Nov. 22
 8353 Mr. Chimp Raises Cain—Var. Views (9 m.)...Nov. 29
 8237 Meatless Tuesday—Andy Panda (7 m.)...Dec. 20
 8374 World's Greatest Aviator—Per. Odd. (9 m.)...Dec. 20
 8354 Wings in Record Time—Var. Views (9 m.)...Dec. 27

Universal—Two Reels

8781 The Black Hangman Strikes—Flying Cadets
 (21 m.)Sept. 7
 8782 Menaced by Murderers—Flying Cadets
 (19 m.)Sept. 14
 8783 Into the Flames—Flying Cadets (20 m.)...Sept. 21
 8784 Doorway of Death—Flying Cadets (19 m.)...Sept. 28
 8121 Hit Tune Serenade—Musical (15 m.).....Sept. 29
 8785 Crashed in a Crater—Flying Cadets (18 m.)...Oct. 5
 8786 Rendezvous with Doom—Flying Cadets
 (19 m.)Oct. 12
 8787 Gestapo Execution—Flying Cadets (18 m.)...Oct. 19
 8788 Masters of Treachery—Flying Cadets (18m.)...Oct. 26
 8122 Sweet Jam—Musical (15 m.).....Oct. 27
 8789 Wings of Destruction—Flying Cadets (17m.)...Nov. 2
 8790 Caught in the Caves of Ann-Kar-Ban—
 Flying Cadets (19 m.).....Nov. 9
 8791 Hostages for Treason—Flying Cadets (18m.)...Nov. 16
 8792 The Black Hangman Strikes Again—Flying Cadets
 (20 m.)Nov. 23
 8123 Choo-Choo Swing—Musical (15 m.).....Nov. 24
 8793 The Toll of Treason—Flying Cadets (18m.)...Nov. 30
 8124 Radio Melodies—Musical (15 m.).....Dec. 29

Vitaphone—One Reel
1942-43

8723 Inky and the Minna Bird—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)
 (re.)Nov. 13
 8612 Daffy the Commando—Looney Tune (7 m.)
 (re.)Nov. 20
 8724 An Itch in Time—Mer. Mel. (7 m.).....Dec. 4
 8613 Puss and Booty—Looney Tune (7 m.).....Dec. 11
 8725 Little Red Riding Habit—Mer. Mel. (7m.)...Dec. 18
 8726 What's Cookin' Doc?—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)...Jan. 1
 (End of 1942-43 Season)

1943-44

9301 A Feud There Was—Mer. Mel. (reissue)
 (7 m.)Sept. 11
 9601 Hit Parade of the Gay Nineties—Mel. Mas.
 (10 m.)Sept. 18
 9402 Bees A' Buzzin—Varieties (10 m.).....Sept. 18
 9302 Early Bird Gets the Worm—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)
 (reissue)Oct. 2
 9501 Tropical Sport Land—Sports (10 m.).....Oct. 9
 9602 Sweetheart Serenade—Mel. Mas. (10 m.)...Oct. 23
 9303 My Little Buckaroo—Mer. Mel. (7 m.)
 (reissue)Nov. 6
 9401 Alaskan Frontier—Varieties (10m) (re.)...Nov. 6
 9502 Desert Playground—Sports (10 m.).....Nov. 13
 9603 Cavalcade of the Dance—Mel. Mas. (10m.)...Nov. 20
 9304 Fighting 69½—Mr. Mel. (7 m.) (reissue)...Dec. 4
 9604 Freddie Fisher & His Band—Mel. Mas (10m.)...Dec. 18

Vitaphone—Two Reels

9107 Oklahoma Outlaws—Sante Fe West. (20m.)...Sept. 4
 9001 Women at War—Special (20 m.)Oct. 2
 9101 Voice That Thrilled the World—Featurette
 (20 m.)Oct. 16
 9108 Wagon Wheels West—Sante Fe West. (20m.)...Oct. 30
 9002 Behind the Big Top—Special (20 m.).....Nov. 27
 9003 Task Force—Special (20 m.).....Dec. 11
 9102 Over the Wall—Featurette (20 m.).....Dec. 25

**NEWSWEEKLY
NEW YORK
RELEASE DATES****Pathe News**

45125 Sat. (O)...Nov. 20
 45226 Wed. (E) Nov. 24
 45127 Sat. (O)...Nov. 27
 45228 Wed. (E) Dec. 1
 45129 Sat. (O)...Dec. 4
 45230 Wed. (E) Dec. 8
 45131 Sat. (O)...Dec. 11
 45232 Wed. (E) Dec. 15
 45133 Sat. (O)...Dec. 18
 45234 Wed. (E) Dec. 22
 45135 Sat. (O)...Dec. 25
 45236 Wed. (E) Dec. 29
 45137 Sat. (O)...Jan. 1

Fox Movietone

23 Tues. (O)...Nov. 23
 24 Thurs. (E)...Nov. 25
 25 Tues. (O)...Nov. 30
 26 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 2
 27 Tues. (O)...Dec. 7
 28 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 9
 29 Tues. (O)...Dec. 14
 30 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 16
 31 Tues. (O)...Dec. 21
 32 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 23
 33 Tues. (O)...Dec. 28
 34 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 30
 35 Tues. (O)...Jan. 4

Universal

242 Fri. (E)....Nov. 19
 243 Wed. (O)...Nov. 24
 244 Fri. (E)....Nov. 26
 245 Wed. (O)...Dec. 1
 246 Fri. (E)....Dec. 3
 247 Wed. (O)...Dec. 8
 248 Fri. (E)....Dec. 10
 249 Wed. (O)...Dec. 15
 250 Fri. (E)....Dec. 17
 251 Wed. (O)...Dec. 22
 252 Fri. (E)....Dec. 24
 253 Wed. (O)...Dec. 29
 254 Fri. (E)....Jan. 1

Metrotone News

221 Tues (O)...Nov. 23
 222 Thurs. (E)...Nov. 25
 223 Tues. (O)...Nov. 30
 224 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 2
 225 Tues. (O)...Dec. 7
 226 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 9
 227 Tues. (O)...Dec. 14
 228 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 16
 229 Tues. (O)...Dec. 21
 230 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 23
 231 Tues. (O)...Dec. 28
 232 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 30
 233 Tues. (O)...Jan. 4

Paramount News

23 Sun. (O)....Nov. 21
 24 Thurs. (E)...Nov. 25
 25 Sun. (O)....Nov. 28
 26 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 2
 27 Sun (O)....Dec. 5
 28 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 9
 29 Sun. (O)....Dec. 12
 30 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 16
 31 Sun. (O)....Dec. 19
 32 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 23
 33 Sun. (O)....Dec. 26
 34 Thurs. (E)...Dec. 30
 35 Sun. (O)Jan. 2

All American News

(Negro Newsreel)

National Release Dates

56 FridayNov. 19
 57 FridayNov. 26
 58 FridayDec. 3
 59 FridayDec. 10
 60 FridayDec. 17
 61 FridayDec. 24
 62 FridayDec. 31

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Columns, if It is to Benefit the Exhibitor.

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SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1943

No. 48

HERE AND THERE

A HIGHLIGHT OF National Allied's Board of Directors meeting held last week in Milwaukee, in conjunction with the meeting of the Allied Caravan Committee and the fifth annual convention of the Independent Theatre Owners of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan (formerly known as the Independent Theatres Protective Association of Wis., & U. Mich.), was the return of that old warrior, W. A. (Al) Steffes, to active participation in the cause of the independent exhibitors.

Steffes, who early in 1940 was stricken with a heart ailment that compelled him to withdraw from active organization work, was his old dynamic self in a speech he made to a joint session of Allied's Board and the ITO of Wis., & U. Mich., in which he touched upon the different abuses practiced by the distributors on the independent exhibitors. Pointing out that in unity there is strength, Steffes urged Allied to canvass every state in which it does not now have a unit, with a view towards enlarging and strengthening the membership so that it might become an organization so powerful that the distributors will be compelled to accede to its demands for equitable business dealings.

Steffes announced to the joint session that he and a few members of the old Northwest Allied Unit, which was dropped by National Allied for non-payment of dues, had formed a new Minnesota exhibitor association to be known as the Motion Picture Theatre Owners Union of the Northwest, and that the new organization had filed an application to become affiliated with Allied.

Al Steffes' recovery from illness, and his decision to become active once again in exhibitor affairs, will be greeted with hurrahs in exhibitor circles. For many years he has fought vigorously against unfair distributor practices, and no one has been more militant and sincere than he. Even distributor circles will be pleased at his return, for though he fought them hard, Steffes always fought them fair.

Welcome back, Al, you have the best wishes of every independent theatre owner.

* * *

ANOTHER HIGHLIGHT at the Milwaukee meetings was the observation by Abram F. Myers, Allied's General Counsel and Board Chairman, who, speaking about the advantages of having a strong organization, said the following:

"There is a great need for exhibitors to exchange information and secure the cooperation and support of each other with the problems to be faced by reductions in releases, advancing prices, increased percentage and playing time. No exhibitor can afford to be an isolationist."

To those of you who are "isolationists" in your business affairs, HARRISON'S REPORTS cannot stress too strongly the value of organization. It is one of the greatest protecting factors, for when members of a particular business are organized, they are able to put up an effective defense against hostile forces. As an individual, your protests against predatory business practices and unjust taxation amount to no more than a "pip-squeak." Unified and coordinated in an

organization, these same protests amount to a roar, the volume of which makes a definite impression.

Many exhibitor leaders throughout the country are giving unselfishly of their time, and even of their money, in their efforts to protect the interests of all. They are entitled to your undivided support, not only morally, but also financially, for it is impossible to wage a continuous campaign for the protection of your interests without funds. Fairness demands that all share the burden of costs. The dues you will pay to an organization will help provide the needed funds.

Join an independent exhibitor organization and help it to give you the protection you need. Make sure, however, that the organization you join is truly independent, and not one, such as the M.P.T.O.A., that is subsidized and controlled by the producer-distributors.

AMAZING FACTS AND FINDINGS

(Continued from last week)

Selective and Exclusive Contracts

The findings of the Special Master on the subjects of selective and exclusive contracts and overbuying are so definite and unequivocal, and of such importance to the industry in general, that many of them are here quoted in full.

"To a very large extent it was the practice of the defendant exhibitors to obtain licenses for the exhibition of the product of the defendant distributors and of other distributors by means of selective contracts. These contracts either took the form of a purchase of a specified minimum, to be selected by the exhibitor from the total number, with the equivalent of an option to license the remaining features, or of the purchase of the entire product, with the right to eliminate a specified number, usually from the low-bracket or low-priced pictures, which were of the poorest quality.

"Until the right of selection or rejection was exercised the distributor did not know which films the exhibitor desired to play, and therefore could not make them available to any competing exhibitor."*

"Even after the definite rejection of films the defendant exhibitors frequently desired to retain control over them and prevent their exhibition for as long a time as possible by the opposition. . . .

"The system of selective contracts adopted and used by the defendant exhibitors and distributors was an extremely effective method of minimizing and eliminating competition. The contracts tied up all the season's product of the distributors until the defendant exhibitors should choose to release a part of it; they allowed the defendant exhibitors to select and exhibit substantially all the valuable films of the defendant distributors, and prevented competitors from receiving anything except old pictures of comparatively little value.

"Because of the selective contracts made by the defendant exhibitors and their policy of tying up the product of the

(Continued on last page)

"Where Are Your Children" with Gale Storm and Jackie Cooper

(Monogram, January 24; time, 72½ min.)

A good melodrama. Being the first picture to deal with the juvenile delinquency problem, "Where Are Your Children" emerges as a strong indictment against parents, whose war work activities has resulted in neglect of their children, thus creating one of the country's major war-time problems. In addition to the interesting manner in which the subject has been presented, the story has strong dramatic and emotional situations, and holds one's interest throughout. Monogram has given the picture a good production, bringing out vividly the loose morals of some of our 'teen-age youngsters, and their utter disregard for law and order. The acting is very good. Gale Storm, as the young girl who falls in with bad companions, gives an outstanding performance. The timeliness of the topic lends itself to exploitation and, properly handled, the film should show good box-office results:—

Gale Storm, a sixteen-year-old waitress, is persuaded by Jackie Cooper to accompany him to a shady night-club. Although Jackie refuses an offer to have liquor put in their drinks, two of his companions (Evelynne Eaton and Jimmy Zaner) pour some into Gale's glass without her knowledge. She becomes tipsy. Patricia Morison, a juvenile probation officer, notices her condition. She takes Gale home to a ramshackle house, where she lived with her brother and his wife (Anthony Ward and Gertrude Michael), defense workers, who had little time to attend to Gale's welfare. Jackie tries to accept the blame, but Ward orders him out of the house. Gale and Jackie meet secretly and fall in love. Shortly thereafter, Jackie is inducted into the Navy. One of his letters is intercepted by Gertrude, who accuses Gale of carrying on an affair with the boy. Resentful, Gale leaves home. She meets Evelynne, Jimmy, and Neal Marx, who invite her to go for a ride to San Diego, where Jackie was stationed. En route, she learns that her companions had stolen the car. Marx, to avoid paying a gas bill, murders an elderly gas station attendant. Gale flees from the group and hitch-hikes to San Diego. She manages to see Jackie for a few fleeting moments, prior to his leaving on a cruise. She is picked up by the police and arrested as an accessory to the crime. Her companions, too, had been caught. Jackie, learning of Gale's predicament, obtains permission from his commanding officer to testify in her behalf. At the trial, Judge John Litel, after denouncing the parents and guardians of the youngsters for their laxity, orders Marx to stand trial for the murder; sends Evelynne to an institution for the mentally ill; assigns Jimmy to a work farm; and exonerates Gale on the strength of Jackie's sincere testimony. Gale, waiting for Jackie's return from the war, spends her time helping Patricia manage a recreation center for children.

Hilary Lynn wrote the screen play, Jeffrey Bernerd produced it, and William Nigh directed it. The cast includes Addison Richards, Betty Blythe, Herbert Rawlinson and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Smart Guy" with Rick Vallin, Bobby Larson and Wanda McKay

(Monogram, December 17; time, 63 min.)

A fair program entertainment, suitable for small-town and neighborhood theatres. The story is not particularly exciting or novel but it has some good human touches and manages to hold one's interest pretty well. The action revolves around a hardened gambling racketeer whose affection for an orphaned newsboy makes him see the error of his ways. Bobby Larson, as the newsboy, is an appealing youngster. Rick Vallin, as the racketeer who is unjustly accused of manslaughter, manages to win the spectator's sympathy. The romantic interest is pleasant:—

As the result of the accidental death of a drunken patron who had lost his money gambling, Rick Vallin, owner of a

string of gambling houses, is held on a manslaughter charge. Addison Richards, the district attorney, determines to send Vallin to jail. To gain public sympathy for himself, Vallin employs Jack LaRue, a press agent. LaRue induces Vallin to adopt Bobby Larson, a newsboy. The two grow fond of each other. Jealous of his love for the boy, Veda Ann Borg, Vallin's girl-friend, plots with LaRue to double-cross Vallin. She lies about the boy in an attempt to discredit him, but Vallin, learning the truth, rids himself of both Veda and LaRue. Veda, who has been present at the time of the accident, determines not to testify in Vallin's behalf. Positive that he would be convicted, Vallin decides to leave town and hide from the police. He bids Bobby goodbye, but the boy hides in his car. Away from the city, Vallin discovers Bobby. The two go to a mountain resort owned by Wanda McKay. Vallin and Wanda eventually fall in love, in spite of the fact that she was aware of his identity. Bobby unthinkingly telephones Mary Gordon, Vallin's housekeeper, to tell her where they are, and the police, listening in, are able to locate Vallin's hideout. When the police arrive, Bobby runs to warn Vallin. The police shoot at the boy in an attempt to stop him. Vallin, seeing what is happening, rushes to the boy's aid. He is captured and taken way to stand trial. Bobby and Wanda promise to wait for his return.

Charles R. Marion and John W. Kraft wrote the screen play, John T. Coyle produced it, and Lambert Hillyer directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"So's Your Uncle" with Billie Burke, Donald Woods and Elyse Knox

(Universal, December 3; time, 64 min.)

Amusing. It is another one of the Universal "assembly-line" comedies with music, suitable for the lower half of a double bill. The story is extremely far-fetched, but several of the situations are quite comical; particularly funny is a night-club sequence, in which Donald Woods, unaware that he had borrowed the dress coat of a magician, creates a panic when mice and rabbits emerge from the coat in the middle of the dance floor. Interspersed are specialty numbers by Mary O'Brien, a songstress; The Tailor Maids, a harmony trio; the Delta Rhythm Boys, a colored singing quintet; and Jan Garber and his orchestra, who play popular swing music—all are entertaining. Billie Burke gives her usual good performance as a fluttering, middle-aged socialite in search of a husband:—

Rushing from a theatre in a bearded make-up to avoid a creditor, Donald Woods, actor and playwright, is run down by Elyse Knox's car. Elyse insists on taking the "middle-aged" victim home, over the protests of Robert Lowery, her escort. There Woods meets Billie Burke, Elyse's wealthy aunt, who believing him to be her own age, readily annexes herself to him. Smitten with Elyse, but at the same time desiring to humor Miss Burke, in the hope that she will provide financial backing for his play, Woods represents himself as his wealthy uncle (Paul Stanton), whom Woods, in make-up, resembled closely. As the "uncle," Woods tells Miss Burke of his "nephew," thus gaining an opportunity to visit the house as himself. Woods spends many days playing both himself and the uncle, alternately wooing Elyse and Miss Burke. Complications set in when Miss Burke arranges an engagement party and plans to announce a double wedding. At the party, Woods goes through some hectic moments making quick changes so as not to arouse the suspicions of the guests. He is saved from his predicament by the timely arrival of his uncle, who, sympathizing with the young man, agrees to become engaged to the unsuspecting Miss Burke.

Maurice Leo and Clyde Bruckman wrote the screen play, and Jean Yarbrough produced and directed it. The cast includes Frank Jenks, Chester Clute, Irving Bacon and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Is Everybody Happy?" with Ted Lewis, Michael Duane and Nan Wynn

(Columbia, October 28; time, 73 min.)

Those who enjoy Ted Lewis' brand of music and his well known mannerisms should find this a satisfactory program entertainment. What puts the picture over are the musical numbers, for the story itself, which is supposedly biographical of Lewis' career, is familiar, and the treatment is routine. Exhibitors will have to depend on Lewis' popularity to attract patrons to the theatre since the others in the cast are not strong box-office attractions. All the songs are tunes that were popular during the "jazz" and "ragtime" eras, and a number of them are pleasantly sung by Nan Wynn. The story is told in the flashback method, with Lewis' appearances confined to the prologue and epilogue:—

During a visit to an army camp, Ted Lewis meets Private Robert Stanford and learns that he is the son of his old vaudeville partner. He learns also that the boy was in love with Lynn Merrick, and that he was afraid to marry her lest he return from the war an invalid. Lewis arranges a meeting with the young couple, and tells them a story. It begins in 1915, when Larry Parks and Michael Duane, struggling vaudevillians, meet Nan Wynn, an unemployed singer, at a Coney Island amateur show. Pleased with her style of singing, the boys induce her to join with them. They get together with three musicians from New Orleans and form a band. Because their type of ragtime music, called "jazz," is radical, they are unable to obtain bookings. Their funds run low, and they are ejected from their boarding house for non-payment of rent. Desperate, they put on an impromptu concert in front of Rector's Restaurant. A millionaire playboy, intrigued by the "hot" music, arranges with the restaurant manager to engage them. They are an immediate success. Both Duane and Parks vie for Nan's love. Parks wins her. On the day of their wedding, World War I is declared. Parks enlists, while Duane and Nan carry on with the band entertaining troops. With the Armistice, Parks returns, crippled by the loss of one arm. He believes that his future as a piano player is ruined, but Nan cheers him on. They are married, and Parks becomes a famous one-armed trumpet player. His story finished, Lewis reveals that he had been speaking of Stanford's parents. Convinced that they should not wait for the war to end, Stanford and Lynn decide to marry.

Monte Brice wrote the screen play, Irving Briskin produced it, and Charles Barton directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Jack London" with Michael O'Shea and Susan Hayworth

(United Artists, no release date set; time, 94 min.)

Biographical of the life of Jack London, this melodrama is an interesting entertainment. The biggest drawing card is the title itself, for the literary fame of Jack London is known widely in this country. The film traces his fabulous career as an adventurer and author, whose struggles and violent experiences, as well as the ugliness he found in the world, were reflected in his writings. Because the story deals with the outstanding incidents in London's life, the picture is episodic. But this does not diminish one's interest, for the action is at times thrilling, and for the most part interesting. A timely note has been injected in those scenes that deal with London's adventures as a war correspondent during the Russo-Japanese War. In addition to Japanese atrocities, it is shown that as early as 1904 Japan laid her plans for world domination, and that London's efforts to arouse this country to the danger were ignored. Michael O'Shea, as London, gives a creditable performance. His romance with Susan Hayworth is appealing:—

Driven by an overpowering desire for excitement, Jack London (Michael O'Shea) becomes an oyster bed pirate. His lawless existence, and his tempestuous relationship with

Mamie (Virginia Mayo), a waterfront waif, gives him satisfaction until his partner (Regis Toomey) is killed by a police patrol. He leaves Mamie to seek adventure on a sealing schooner sailing to the Bering Sea. He earns enough money to go to college to study writing, but the failure of his professor (Harry Davenport) to understand the truth of his expressions causes him to leave school. In search of a fortune, London goes to the Yukon gold fields. He does not find gold, but in the lonely solitude of his barren hut he writes his Alaskan stories, which catch the public's fancy and make him one of America's best known authors. He falls in love with Charmian Kitteridge (Susan Hayward), his publisher's secretary. Their marriage plans are interrupted when London goes to Africa to cover the Boer War. Back home again, London sets a definite date for the marriage. But once again their plans are blocked when news comes of the Russo-Japanese War. As war correspondent for a chain of newspapers, London accompanies a group of eminent newspapermen to Japan, only to find that the Japanese will not permit them to visit the front. Disregarding diplomatic rulings, London manages to get to the front and to scoop his fellow-correspondents with his harrowing eyewitness accounts. He is arrested and jailed by the Japanese for taking photos, but is released through the intervention of the President. Returning to America, London determines to dedicate his life awakening his countrymen to the menace of Japan, whose plan for world conquest he had learned.

Ernest Pascal wrote the screen play, based on "The Book of Jack London" by Charmian London. Samuel Bronston produced it, and Albert Santell directed it. The cast includes Frank Craven, Osa Massen, Ralph Morgan, Louise Beavers, Jonathan Hale and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Around the World" with Kay Kyser, Mischa Auer and Joan Davis

(RKO, no release date set; time, 81 min.)

Just a moderately entertaining program comedy with music. The story is absolutely meaningless, and it serves merely as a framework for the rendition of numerous tunes in the Kay Kyser manner. The "jitterbug" set should enjoy it, but others may find it tiresome, for there is little variety or distinction in Kyser's presentation of the musical numbers. A redeeming feature is the clowning of Joan Davis; each time she appears she brightens things up considerably, provoking many laughs by her antics. Much of the comedy is of the slapstick variety, the sort that should appeal to youngsters:—

With Mischa Auer, Joan Davis, and his orchestra, Kay Kyser embarks on a world tour to bring entertainment to the armed forces overseas. In Australia, the group meets Marcy McGuire, a stranded teen-age American girl, who pleads that she be taken along. Kyser refuses her. She stows away aboard the plane taking Kyser and the group to China. The American Consul in Chungking orders her returned to Australia, but Kyser, touched by her predicament, assumes responsibility for her. Auer's and Kyser's passion for collecting relics gets them both involved with Axis spies when Auer obtains a scarab ring, unaware that it contained a secret Nazi document. From Chungking the party moves on to Cairo, where other Axis spies attempt to get the ring away from Auer. Their efforts are unsuccessful, for Auer, discovers the document and turns it over to the authorities. In Tunisia, the last stop of the tour, Marcy learns that her father, an American flier, had been killed in action. Restraining her grief, Marcy, like a true trouper, joins the others in a rousing musical finale.

Ralph Spence wrote the screen play, and Allan Dwan produced and directed it. The cast includes Robert Armstrong, "Ish" Kabibble, Georgia Carroll, Harry Babbitt, Wally Brown, Alan Carney and others.

Morally suitable for all.

major companies and of the leading independent distributors, it was essential to the success of their competitors, except Millett, that they be able to secure second run films of the major distributors. During the seasons 1936-37 to 1940-41, however, the defendant exhibitors to a large extent have prevented them from securing such product by means of exclusive contracts or agreements for the exhibition of the feature films of the major distributors in their various theatres."

Then, after reciting testimony of the defendant Samuel Kurson to the effect that for the past twenty years he had an understanding with every distributor from which he bought pictures that it should not sell second run to any of the opposition because of the high prices paid for first run, the frank admission by counsel for the defendant exhibitors that they objected to second run being sold in their localities, and the testimony of the district manager of Fox and the branch manager of Universal in regard to the existence and performance of exclusive agreements, the Special Master found:

"The representatives of some other distributors either denied or refused to admit the existence and performance of such agreements. These denials were false, and were made with full knowledge of their falsity, in order to prevent full disclosure of the true facts and to conceal the existence of the conspiracy charged. The defendant exhibitors had an understanding or agreement with all the major distributors that they would not license any features second run to competing theatres."

He also found:

"On these facts it is my view, and I find, that the agreement of any one of the major distributors, at the insistence of the dominant exhibitor, to refuse to sell second run to a competitor, constituted a contract and combination in restraint of trade. Each distributor, acting independently, had a right to sell or not to sell second run in any locality, if the decision were reached as a result of its own independent determination. But the defendant exhibitors had no proprietary interest in any of the films; by the license agreements they had merely a right to the temporary exhibition of the films; and an understanding reached or agreement made, at the insistence of the defendant exhibitors, such as I find, for the imposition of any restriction of an unreasonable nature upon the right of the distributor to sell, or the right of the competing exhibitor to buy, constituted a contract within the prohibitions of the anti-trust laws.

"Standing alone, either the system of exclusive contracts or the system of selective contracts was an efficient weapon of monopoly and restraint of trade. Combined, they constituted a menace to competition and an instrument of oppression and destruction.

"If the practices of the defendants had continued in full force, and had not been checked or modified by fear of litigation or in an effort to avoid liability for conspiracy, none of the competitors of the defendant exhibitors (except Millett, who had a split of the product of four companies the greater part of the time) could have continued to operate."

Overbuying

"Each season it has been the practice of the defendant exhibitors to license all the product of all the big companies. They generally bought all the pictures they could get. This practice was carried out with the knowledge that it would deprive competitors of product necessary for the operation of their theatres."

The Special Master found, moreover, that in Bridgton, Millinocket and Middlebury the defendant exhibitors had

bought each season a large number of features in excess of their requirements, and had thereby monopolized a part of interstate commerce.

Destruction of Records

The Master found that on October 21, 1940, the plaintiffs gave notice in writing of the proposed taking of the deposition of the defendant Samuel Kurson; and that on the last day of October, 1940, "the defendant exhibitors removed their place of business as the Graphic Circuit from Bangor, Maine, to Boston, Mass."

"Immediately prior to that day the defendant Samuel Kurson caused the destruction of papers and records that would have constituted material evidence in these actions. Under his direction a great deal of the papers and documents were burned, and a quantity was hauled off to a dump."

The papers destroyed included records prior to January 1, 1938, showing the playing of product, daily box office reports, booking cards, and correspondence with managers and distributors.

"I find that the destruction by the defendant Samuel Kurson of records and papers prior to 1938, as above stated, and his failure to produce other papers, including correspondence by the aforesaid managers and genuine profit and loss statements, or to explain the reason for non-production, constitute wilful attempts to conceal the truth and evidence that if they had been produced they would tend to support the plaintiff's charges. I also infer that the failure of the defendant exhibitors to testify (other than Samuel Kurson, who was subpoenaed by the plaintiff) indicate their view that no honest testimony by them would have been helpful in rebutting the plaintiff's charges or in establishing a defense."

Conspiracy of Major Distributors with the Defendant Exhibitors

The Special Master reported at some length the relations of the major distributors with each other, the "pooling" of theatres, franchises and master contracts, certain loans of money and transfers of capital stock, the activities of the Hays Organization, particularly in regard to standard exhibition contract, credit practices, buying or booking combinations of exhibitors, copyright protection, production code seal and protection.

"By 1936 the business methods and practices of the major distributors were substantially uniform, not only in the licensing of their films but also in the sales structure, the management of their offices, the keeping of records, and in the solicitation and approval of contracts, the shipment, delivery and return of prints, the allocation of prices to features, the time of exhibition (including provisions for playing in the sequence of release), minimum cancellation, and penalties for breach. Most of the practices in dealing with exhibitors have been governed by the license agreements, which were generally of the same tenor and contained voluminous printed provisions specifying in detail the rights and obligations of the parties.

"In view of my other findings it seems unnecessary for me to make any specific finding whether or not these practices have been the result of a general combination and conspiracy of the major distributors and their affiliated corporations to dominate the industry and to aid each other in its regulation and government. Beyond any question the relationship of the major distributors has been very close in many respects, and they have shown a strong tendency toward cooperation in regard to trade practices for their mutual benefit."

(To be concluded next week)

*EDITOR'S NOTE: All matter within quotation marks represents direct quotations from the Special Master's reports.

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AMAZING FACTS AND FINDINGS

(Continued from last week)

The Special Master made the following findings:

"From the evidence and the inferences reasonably to be drawn from it, I am convinced, and I find, that the major distributors (with the exception of Paramount, Loew's, Fox and Universal in regard to Bridgton) have engaged with the defendant exhibitors and with each other in a combination and conspiracy to restrain interstate trade and commerce: to-wit, the licensing and exhibition of motion picture films in the various localities in the said States of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont in which the defendant exhibitors operate theatres; that they have engaged with the defendant exhibitors and with each other in a combination and conspiracy to monopolize a part of interstate trade and commerce; and that they have aided and abetted the defendant exhibitors in their attempts to monopolize said part of interstate trade and commerce: to-wit, the licensing and exhibition of motion picture films in the said localities. The purpose and effect of said combination and conspiracy, and of said attempts to monopolize, have been and are to eliminate competition by other operators of theatres in said localities, including the plaintiff, in the licensing and exhibition of motion picture films in said interstate trade and commerce.

"At all times the said major distributors have had fairly accurate knowledge of the operating policies and the number of feature films necessary for exhibition each season in the theatres of the defendant exhibitors in Millinocket, Bridgton and Middlebury; and they knew that if, in each locality, the defendant exhibitors licensed only sufficient for their own reasonable needs, there would be an adequate supply of product for all theatres. They know that each season the defendant exhibitors were contracting for more feature films than could reasonably be exhibited in the proper operation of their theatres in the said localities; that through the medium of selective contracts they had taken options upon additional feature films; and that they were substantially overbuying, and thereby 'cornering,' the supply of commercially valuable feature films.

"The said distributors have had knowledge of the product which had been bought and used in past seasons by the defendant exhibitors in these localities. They knew that in any of the three situations, on a proper operating policy, the defendant exhibitors could secure all the product they might reasonably desire by licensing the entire product of four of the major distributors in Millinocket and Middlebury, or one-half the product of Paramount, Metro, Fox and Universal, and the entire product of two additional major companies in Bridgton, or by securing an even split of the product of all eight major distributors in each of the three towns.

"Over a period of years the major distributors have known that the defendant exhibitors had insisted that no films for which they had contracted, first run, should be exhibited

second run in any of the localities in which they operated theatres. They have been fully aware of the general nature of the contracts and agreements made by the defendant exhibitors with other major distributors, and have realized that overbuying of product, selective contracts and exclusive agreements were very potent instrumentalities for the elimination of competition. They have had knowledge that the purpose of the defendant exhibitors in tying up more product than could be used in their theatres in said localities was to prevent their competitors from securing it, and thereby injure them and eliminate or restrict their competition; and have known, and have had reasonable cause to believe, that the defendant exhibitors had the purpose and intention, and had engaged in a plan or scheme or conspiracy, to eliminate and restrict competition in the towns of Millinocket, Bridgton and Middlebury."

"The major distributors knew that the scheme or purpose could not be effective without the active cooperation of all the major distributors or of a substantial proportion of them; that the defendant exhibitors were demanding substantially the same stipulations and restrictions from other distributors as from it; and that there was no reason they should insist upon restrictions against competitors in their dealings with it that they did not insist upon in their dealings with the other major distributors."

"Generally the distributors were reluctant to grant the demands of the defendant exhibitors. Each distributor was willing to make the concession or stipulation or to impose the restriction required only if the other distributors were willing to make or impose it; and each distributor was aware of the extent to which the other distributors were cooperating with the defendant exhibitors."

"With full knowledge of the facts and of the effect of their acts, the aforesaid major distributors surrendered their freedom of individual contract and yielded to the demands of the defendant exhibitors, and cooperated with them and with the other distributors, and aided and abetted them, in their scheme and conspiracy, by licensing to them more feature films than they could reasonably use, and by granting selective contracts and by entering into exclusive agreements and allowing them other privileges and concessions and by refusing to contract or deal with competing exhibitors, including the plaintiff, in a normal and usual manner."

Damages and Injunction

The Special Master found that, as a result of the defendants' violations of the anti-trust laws, the plaintiffs had sustained injury and damage, which might be ascertained with a reasonable degree of accuracy; and that, unless restrained by the Court, the defendants would continue to monopolize and attempt to monopolize, and to combine and conspire to monopolize interstate trade and commerce in motion picture films, thereby causing the plaintiffs irreparable injury and damage.

(Continued on last page)

*EDITOR'S NOTE: All matter within quotation marks represents direct quotations from the Special Master's reports.

**"She's for Me" with David Bruce,
George Dolenz and Grace McDonald**
(Universal, Dec. 17; time, 60 min.)

Just a mildly entertaining program comedy with music; the story is thin and drags considerably in spots. The players do their best, but they cannot overcome the mediocre material given them. Although it is a little silly at times, it will probably get by with non-discriminating audiences, the sort that enjoy light comedies with music of the popular variety; intelligent audiences will be bored. There are two romances, both of which are developed in a routine manner—a misunderstanding and a final reconciliation:—

Lois Collier brusquely enters the law offices of Charles Dingle, her uncle, and berates David Bruce, junior member of the firm, for cutting off her credit at different night-clubs. Bruce, a methodical young man, explains that she had been overdrawing her allowance. Lois departs haughtily. On leaving, she bumps into George Dolenz, a new member of the firm. Both are attracted to each other. Dingle invites Bruce and Dolenz to dinner at his home, where Lois and Dolenz make no secret of their admiration for each other. Knowing Dolenz to be a man-about-town, Bruce disapproves of the romance. He contacts Grace McDonald, a cabaret singer and former sweetheart of Dolenz's, and asks her to help him break up the romance. Grace, who had left her job in a cheap night-club in the belief that Bruce was going to offer her a position in a high-class club, declines the proposition and condemns Bruce for fooling her. To make amends, Bruce obtains an engagement for her at an exclusive cabaret. Grace, grateful to Bruce, changes her mind and agrees to his scheme. Bruce brings Dolenz and Lois to the cabaret, where Grace throws her arms around Dolenz and addresses him lovingly. Infuriated, Lois leaves. Later Dolenz convinces Bruce that his love for Lois was genuine, and that he wanted to marry her. Both Grace and Bruce try to explain to Lois, but to no avail. Lois eventually learns the truth, and she is reunited with Lorenz in Bruce's office. Dingle, who had been under the impression that Bruce, his favorite partner, enjoyed the affections of his niece, enters the office to find Lois in Dolenz's arms, and Bruce, who had fallen in love with Grace, kissing the singer. He gives both couples his blessing.

Henry Blankford wrote the screen play, Frank Gross produced it, and James Hogan directed it. The cast includes Manton Moreland, Helen Brown and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"The Heat's On" with Mae West,
Victor Moore and William Gaxton**
(Columbia, Dec. 2; time, 79 min.)

Moderately entertaining in part, but tiresome on the whole. It will need all of the players' popularity to put it across, for the story is thin and none too novel. Moreover, it is completely lacking in human interest, and none of the characters do anything worthwhile. Mae West, whose age is becoming obvious, is ineffectual; her sexy mannerisms seem outmoded. Her racy dialogue, much of it with double meanings, makes the picture unsuitable for family audiences. With the exception of one song played by Xavier Cugat's orchestra, and a piano arrangement by Hazel Scott, the musical numbers are not particularly outstanding. Victor Moore is comical in a few situations, but they are of the sort that cannot do him or the motion picture industry any good:—

Seeking publicity to boost business on his failing musical show, William Gaxton, a producer, arranges with Victor Moore, a purity league official, to raid the show. Moore had agreed to the scheme because of Gaxton's promise to give his niece (Mary Roche) a part in the play. The scheme boomerangs when the police refuse to allow the show to reopen. Mae West, the star, leaves Gaxton and joins another producer (Alan Dinehart). To prevent Mae from appearing in Dinehart's new play, Gaxton talks Moore into warning Dinehart that his show, too, would be closed. Dinehart, without revealing his true reasons, offers to sell his show to Gaxton. Feigning reluctance, Gaxton buys it. When Almira Sessions, Moore's sister and head of the league, goes to Seattle to a convention, Gaxton goes after Moore once again and talks him into backing the show with the league's money. Mae, refusing to work for Gaxton, leaves the show. She entices Moore up to her apartment and, after getting him intoxicated, learns about Gaxton's schemes. She repeats the story to Dinehart, who in turn contacts Moore's sister in Seattle. Miss Sessions returns immediately and cuts off the league's funds. Gaxton pleads with Mae to help him, pointing out that together they had always been successful. Mae relents. She visits Miss Sessions and, under threat of informing the newspapers that Moore had embezzled the league's funds, compels her to give Gaxton enough money to complete the show. With Mae as the star, the show is a huge success, thus assuring the safety of the league's funds.

Fitzroy Davis, George S. George, and Fred Schiller wrote the screen play, Milton Carter produced it, and Gregory Ratoff directed it.

Definitely not for children or adolescents.

**"The Gang's All Here" with Alice Faye,
Carmen Miranda, Phil Baker
and James Ellison**

(20th Century-Fox, Dec. 24; time, 103 min.)

The extremely lavish production, the Technicolor photography, and the popularity of the players will undoubtedly put this musical over with the rank and file. The dance sequences, enhanced by special photographic effects, are breathtaking in their beauty; spectators will gasp at the exquisite settings and costumes. But like most Twentieth Century-Fox musicals, this, too, is lacking in story values. The story's deficiencies, however, are more than compensated for by the tuneful swing music played by Benny Goodman and his orchestra; the always pleasant singing of Alice Faye's; the bombastic singing and comedy antics of Carmen Miranda, who lets loose her fire on the fretful Edward Everett Horton; the graceful dancing of Tony De Marco; the sophisticated humor of Charlotte Greenwood; and the blustering good-naturedness of Eugene Pallette. Not much can be said for Phil Baker; the little he has to do is undistinguished:—

On the eve of his departure overseas, Sergeant James Ellison, son of wealthy Eugene Pallette, is attracted to Alice Faye, chorus girl at the Club New Yorker. He follows her to a Canteen, where she had gone to entertain soldiers. Suspecting that his social position may work against his best interests, Ellison, to gain Alice's sympathy, assumes another name and pretends to be a lonely soldier in search of companionship. She accompanies him on a date, and dawn finds them deeply in love with each other. She promises to wait for his return. After many months, Ellison, decorated for bravery, notifies his father that he is

homeward bound. Pallette decides to celebrate the homecoming with a big party. He arranges with the Club New Yorker to stage its floor show at the Westchester estate of Edward Everett Horton, his business partner, whose daughter (Sheila Ryan) was engaged to Ellison. At the estate, Alice and Sheila become fast friends, unaware that they both loved the same man. A photo of Ellison in Sheila's bedroom nearly complicates matters, but Carmen Miranda, the show's star, who was aware of Ellison's deception, manages to keep it out of Alice's sight. On the day of the party, Tony De Marco's dancing partner falls ill, upsetting the show's schedule. Sheila, however, shows unusual dancing ability, and she is accepted by De Marco as a substitute. With the arrival of Ellison, who is greeted affectionately by Sheila, Alice learns the truth. Ellison tries to explain that the engagement between Sheila and himself was a family affair over which he nor Sheila was enthusiastic, but Alice refuses to listen. All turns out well when Sheila, elated over her success as De Marco's dancing partner, announces that she will continue with her new career, and that love or marriage did not interest her. Assured that Ellison's love was genuine, Alice rushes into his arms.

Walter Bullock wrote the screen play, William Le Baron produced it, and Busby Berkely directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Jive Junction" with Dickie Moore and Tina Thayer

(PRC, Dec. 20; time, 62 min.)

A mild but pleasant program entertainment. Little imagination has been put into the story, which deals with the trials and tribulations of a 'teen-age high school boy, who finds it necessary to adjust his taste for classical music to that of "jive" music, in order to get along with his schoolmates. The story is immature and hardly of the type to hold the interest of adults; it may, however, appeal to the young folks, who will sympathize with the boy's problems, as well as enjoy the tuneful music. Gerra Young, a thirteen-year-old soprano, shows promise; she is a personable young miss and, with proper training, should prove an asset to PRC:—

On his first day in Clinton High School, Dickie Moore, a serious-minded youngster, finds himself in trouble with his classmates. Selected to conduct a rehearsal in music class, Dickie, an accomplished pianist, loses patience with the poor piano playing of Tina Thayer's. Jack Wagners, Tina's self-appointed boy-friend, challenges Dickie to a fight, but the boy declines, claiming that he must save his hands for the piano. Returning home, Dickie learns that his father, a pilot, had been killed in action. Tina, feeling sympathy for Dickie, rouses him from his grief by inducing him to organize a school "jive" band, so that the youngsters can open a canteen for soldiers stationed nearby. Bill Halligan, caretaker of a huge estate, permits the youngsters to use an old barn for the canteen. The project is a huge success, but the girls, attracted by the soldiers' uniforms, forsake their schoolboy sweethearts. The boys blame their dilemma on Dickie. A poster announcing a nation-wide contest for school bands awaken the lads from their gloom. Led by Dickie, the school band wins steadily, reaching the finals of the contest. On the day of the final competition, the boys, who had been rehearsing in the barn, learn that the owner of the estate had died, and that the barn, in which they stored their instruments, had

been padlocked. Desperate, Dickie appeals to Frederick Feher, conductor of a great symphony orchestra, and induces him to loan the boys his orchestra's priceless instruments. In addition to winning the contest, the boys win back their girls.

Irving Wallace, Walter Doniger, and Malvin Wald wrote the screen play, Leon Fromkess produced it, and Edgar G. Ulmer directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"O, My Darling Clementine" with Frank Albertson and Lorna Gray

(Republic, Dec. 31; time, 70 min.)

A moderately entertaining program comedy, suitable for small-town theatres. The picture will have to depend on the popularity of the radio entertainers included in the cast, for its chief appeal is to their followers. There is little to the story, which is interpolated with music, and at times it becomes silly and at other times tiresome. The humor is rowdyish but occasionally funny. The radio entertainers include Roy Acuff and His Smoky Mountain Boys and Girls, who sing and play hillbilly music; the Radio Rogues, who impersonate famous stars; Harry "Pappy" Cheshire, the homespun philosopher of radio's "Barnyard Follies"; Irene Ryan of the Tim and Irene radio team; and Isabel Randolph, the "Mrs. Uppington" of the Fibber McGee and Molly radio show—not one is particularly outstanding:—

Broke and hungry, Frank Albertson and his small troupe of entertainers find themselves stranded in Harmony, a small town shackled by ridiculous blue laws, which prohibited all forms of entertainment. Restrained from putting on a show, Albertson demands an opportunity to plead his case. He stages a sample show for the town's councilmen, who like it very much, but their domineering wives insist that Albertson be run out of town. Harry "Pappy" Cheshire, the Mayor, tired of being hen-pecked by Isabel Randolph, his sister, sees in Albertson an opportunity to rid the town of its blue laws. He informs Albertson confidentially that a property owner cannot be chased out of town, and gives the young man enough money to buy a worthless lot behind the City Hall. Trouble starts when the Mayor reveals to his sister that, through a strange mix-up, for which she had been responsible, Albertson had been given the deed to the City Hall. Miss Albertson tries to trick Albertson into selling the property back, but Lorna Gray, the Mayor's daughter, warns him against the trick. Learning the truth about his purchase, Albertson agrees to return the property provided he is permitted to stage a musical show, in which the town officials, their wives, and Miss Randolph must take part. All agree. Albertson writes the show, which is a burlesque of the town, stressing the asininity of the blue laws and the people responsible for them. The show is a hilarious success, and Albertson announces his intention to produce it on Broadway. Fearful lest the town and themselves be held up to ridicule, the domineering women promise to relieve Harmony of the nonsensical blue laws if Albertson will cancel his plans. His fight won, Albertson returns the deed to the City Hall and plans to settle down in Harmony, after his marriage to Lorna.

Dorrell and Stuart McGowan wrote the screen play, Armand Schaefer produced it, and Frank McDonald directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

Mr. Mason, the Special Master, is a resident of Ellsworth, Maine. He has been practicing law for many years, and is the Referee in Bankruptcy at Bangor. He is to be sincerely congratulated upon the notable work he has accomplished, the completeness and finality of his reports, and the intimate knowledge which they disclose of the practices in the motion picture industry.

SUMMARY

Some of those of you who have read these articles must have wondered whether you have been reading fiction or facts, for some of them are so astounding that they read like fiction. The personal conduct of the exhibitor defendants, in particular, does not seem to have been that of rational persons. For them to call upon the plaintiff and boldly state to him how they were going to put him out of business, and proceeding to do so by adopting the methods they had threatened to adopt, cannot help making one feel as if their conduct was that of irrational persons.

But the acts that the defendants were accused of, and for which they have been found guilty, are not fiction; they are facts, having been accepted as such by an impartial person, Special Referee Ralph E. Mason, appointed by the District Court to hear the case.

In order that you understand more clearly what the defendant exhibitors were accused of, let us condense these facts:

The Complaint: The plaintiff stated that the defendant exhibitors, by a conspiracy with the defendant distributors, set out to put him out of business by means of contracts by which they obtained either priority or exclusiveness in playdates; by licensing their pictures under such terms as would deprive the plaintiff of the right ever to play such films second run; by obtaining from the defendant distributors selective contracts and then refusing to release the unwanted pictures so as to deprive the plaintiff of the opportunity of playing them; by using their buying power to corner all product in towns where they set up competition and the population of the town was considered insufficient to support two theatres profitably; by giving out passes that practically reduced the admission price to one-half the admission prices charged by plaintiff; by sending small boys either to the lobby of plaintiff's theatre or within the theatre to create disturbance, to the annoyance of patrons; by having small boys pass in the lobby of plaintiff's theatre handbills advertising attractions exhibited in defendant exhibitors' theatre; by threatening plaintiff with arrest in cases where plaintiff refused to admit the guilty boys to his theatre; by reducing admission prices to an unprofitable level with the object of making it impossible for plaintiff to operate his theatre profitably.

During one season, the defendant exhibitors attempted to buy up all product so as to make it impossible for plaintiff to open the doors of his theatre, a practice to which they resorted in the case of other exhibitors, compelling them either to sell their theatres to the defendant exhibitors or to shut them down completely, thus giving defendant exhibitors complete monopoly in the exhibition of films in those particular towns. In other cases they attempted to intimidate the distributors into refusing to sell their pictures to the plaintiff by means of lawsuits that were never tried, or by threatening to bring such suits.

The Special Master found that the defendant exhibitors were guilty of all these acts. He found also that the defendant distributors were guilty in that they conspired with the defendant exhibitors in the furtherance of their schemes to put the plaintiff out of business by acquiescing to the demands of the defendant exhibitors, fully knowing that the effect of such acquiescence would be to put the plaintiff out of business. The defendant distributors knew all the time

how many features the plaintiff had to have in order to conduct his theatre profitably; they also knew how many pictures the defendant exhibitors needed during the year. And yet they became a party to the conspiracy in the defendant exhibitors' attempts to put the plaintiff out of business by selling them more pictures than they needed. The Special Master also found that each defendant distributor knew that the defendant exhibitors were coercing other distributors into selling them all their product. Thus each defendant distributor became a party to the conspiracy, even though there was no common understanding between defendant exhibitors and defendant distributors as a group. As a matter of fact, the Special Master found that each distributor was willing to grant to the defendant exhibitors the terms they demanded provided all the other distributors licensed their pictures to them on the same terms.

The representatives of some of the defendant distributors either denied or refused to admit that they had entered into such contracts with the defendant exhibitors, and these exhibitors, in order to protect the defendant distributors, burned many records and, in addition, transferred their office to Boston, Mass., from Bangor, Maine.

In reference to selective and exclusive contracts, allow me to repeat what the Special Master said, as printed in last week's issue:

"Standing alone, either the system of exclusive contracts or the system of selective contracts was an efficient weapon of monopoly and restraint of trade. Combined, they constitute a menace to competition and an instrument of oppression and destruction."

And yet these vicious practices are carried on everywhere in the United States.

The producers have been talking for years about self-regulation whenever either an anti-block booking or theatre divorce bill has been introduced in Congress for the purpose of correcting these and other abuses. If the continuance of these abuses is the result of self-regulation, may the kind providence protect the exhibitors from it!

"The Deerslayer" with Jean Parker and Bruce Kellogg

(*Republic*, Nov. 22; time, 67 min.)

In the review of this picture, printed in the November 13 issue, the credits were inadvertently omitted. They are as follows:

P. S. Harrison and E. B. Derr wrote the screen play and produced it. Lew Landers directed it.

"Paris After Dark" with George Sanders, Philip Dorn and Brenda Marshall

(*20th Century-Fox*, Oct. 15; time, 85 min.)

In the review of this picture, printed in the October 9 issue, the running time was listed as fifteen minutes. This was a typographical error. The correct running time is 85 minutes.

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New York, N. Y.

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A REVIEWING SERVICE FREE FROM THE INFLUENCE OF FILM ADVERTISING

Vol. XXV

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No. 50

THE PROPOSED TAXATION ON ADMISSIONS

It is doubtful whether all exhibitors realize the seriousness of the situation regarding the proposed admission tax increase, which will double the present tax in general, but more than double it in particular cases.

Because of the unwise publicity that has been put out by either the home offices or the studios of the film companies, telling the people of the United States, either how many hundreds of thousands have been paid for this, that or the other either stage play or novel, or how much prominent executives receive in salaries, or what the earnings of the different stars are, the legislators in Washington have come to feel that the motion picture is a luxury, and as such it should be taxed heavily. The services that the industry has rendered to the nation and is always ready to render it again in the form, not only of either selling bonds, or of getting the Government's messages to the people by means of its short reels, which are shown on all picture-theatre screens, but also of keeping the people's morale high during these trying times, seem to make no difference to these lawmakers.

If the tax bill that has been passed by the House of Representatives is passed also by the Senate, many theatres will go out of business, the operation of many more will be made unprofitable, and the profits of the remaining will undoubtedly be reduced materially.

The Bill, H.R. 3687, is now before the Finance Committee of the U. S. Senate.

At the hearing of the Bill, Mr. Abram F. Myers, representing all the Allied units and about eleven regional exhibitor associations not affiliated with Allied States Association, made a statement on the Bill's section (302) that proposes to increase the tax from 1c for each 10c or fraction, to 2c. Mr. Myers has presented the case of the independent exhibitor with intelligence and skill. He warned the Committee members not to be influenced in their decision by the long queues that they frequently see formed in front of the theatres in Washington, or the first-run theatres in other large cities, but to weigh carefully what would be the effect of this tax upon the small-town theatre operators, who are not situated so fortunately. Here are some extracts from Mr. Myers' paper:

"The independent theatres for which I speak are, for the most part, located in the smaller towns and rural communities and in the residential districts of larger cities. They play the pictures after—usually a long time after—the city downtown theatres. They cater to the family trade, especially to children, and their admissions are, and perforce must be, much lower than those charged by the first-run houses. These theatres provide entertainment for the masses, the laboring people and the white collar workers; they have not cracked the carriage trade. The money paid in at the independent box-offices does not represent excessive wartime spending. Rather it is a question, in most instances, whether the amount required can be spared from the family budget. . . ."

Mr. Myers then goes into plain arithmetic to show what would happen to the 15c admission price, which is what children pay in general, if the 2c tax were to be imposed on this type of admission. At present, Mr. Myers pointed out, the exhibitor absorbs the 2c tax on this admission but under the proposed taxation he could not absorb it, for it would amount to 4c. He would then be compelled to increase the admission price to 19c, a sum which a parent would in most instances refuse to give to his child.

The 25c admission price, too, came in for analysis. This, Mr. Myers said, would disappear under the new taxation, for the exhibitor could not absorb it, for the tax then would be 6c, instead of 3c, as at present. The result will be that the exhibitor would be compelled to charge at least 29c so as to avoid an additional loss. But in such an event, the patronage would decrease.

He presented an analysis of other price levels of admissions.

Mr. Myers cautioned the Committee lest the tax revenue from this source decrease if the tax were increased. "If the Committee will give due consideration to all the factors involved, I am confident it will reach the conclusion that the existing tax of 1c on each 10c or fraction is yielding the maximum return to the Government; that any further tampering . . . may destroy the bird that is laying those shiny eggs. The experienced and thoughtful members of this Committee will realize how extremely dangerous it is to add an additional burden, however small, on the admissions paid by the hard working low income groups that make up the bulk of the attendance at the independent movie houses."

Mr. Myers asked the Committee to take into consideration the shifting of the population from the small rural communities as a result of the war, bringing on these communities suffering; also to distinguish between independent exhibitors and large salary earning picture-executives. Of the 222 picture-industry persons who earned more than \$75,000 in 1941, not one of them was an independent exhibitor.

" . . . In order for the theatres to do the job that has been assigned to them, to take up collections, to gather scrap metals and sell bonds, and to deliver the Government's messages to the people they must have audiences . . .," implying by this that the increase of the price of admission so as to include the new tax would cause the audiences to be diminished.

Mr. Myers concluded his statement by pleading with the Committee to retain the present tax without any change.

Another exhibitor leader who made an intelligent presentation of the small exhibitor's case to the Senate Finance Committee at the hearing on December 3, is Mr. Samuel L. Gillette, president of the Intermountain Theatre Association, in accordance with *Film Daily*, which prints Mr. Gillette's talk. Part of it is the following:

"As I have pointed out previously, the small theatre owner in the small town may be forced to close, and in all probability, the return from him will be lost. Insofar as the

(Continued on last page)

**"The Ghost Ship" with Richard Dix,
Russell Wade and Edith Barrett**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 69 min.)

For audiences that go for horror melodramas, this one should do, for it has been produced fairly well, so far as direction and acting are concerned, but the story is nothing to brag about; there is nothing novel about it, and the development of some of the situations is arbitrary. Most of the interest is centered on Richard Dix, the paranoiac captain of the ship, whose mania is to exercise authority, causing the death of any member of the crew who would show even signs of disobeying him, and of Russell Wade, the young man and new third mate, who had realized that Dix was affected mentally. One of the most cruel scenes is that in which Dix bolts the escape hatch of the chain locker and the sailor who was stowing the heavy chain is crushed to death. Another thrilling scene is the fight with knives between the captain and Skelton Knaggs, a mute sailor. Knaggs overpowers Dix and kills him:—

Russell Wade is happy when, upon leaving a nautical school, he becomes third officer on the tramp freighter *Altair*, captained by Richard Dix. Russell takes a liking to Dix because Dix had been giving him what appeared to be sound advice. But soon he finds out that Dix was a homicidal paranoiac. Unable to convince the representative of the company that Dix was crazy, he leaves the ship. But Dix manages to have him shanghaied and taken aboard the *Altair*. Dix plans to have Russell killed. Russell's effort to convince the members of the crew that Dix was crazy are of no avail; they avoid him because of their fear of the Captain. The radio operator tries to help him out, but Dix kills him. Dix enters Russell's cabin with a knife to kill him but Knaggs, having realized that Russell was right, follows him into the cabin and there ensues a terrific knife fight in which Knaggs kills Dix. Russell takes charge of the ship and brings it into port. There he meets the sister of Edith Barrett, Dix's lady, who had unwittingly been the cause of Russell's shanghaiing aboard the *Altair*.

Mark Robson directed it and Val Lewton produce it, from a story by Leo Mittler, and a screen play by Donald Henderson Clark. The cast includes Ben Bard, Edmund Glover and others.

Being a horror picture naturally it is unsuitable for children or for Sunday showing in small towns.

**"Tarzan's Murder Mystery" with
Johnny Weissmuller, Nancy Kelly
and Johnny Sheffield**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 70 min.)

This Tarzan picture seems to be better than the average of this series. The interest is maintained fairly tense all the way through, and one surrounds Tarzan and Boy with sympathy because of their willingness to help others, and because of the fact that they always remember the sick Mrs. Tarzan, who was ill in London. Cheta, the Chimpanzee, will delight adults, as well as children, because of her pranks as well as her acting. At one time she acts as a tight-rope player, and she performs some difficult tricks. Johnny Sheffield should appeal to parents as well as to children. Wild animals and a huge fake spider cause the usual thrills:—

Mrs. Tarzan, ill in London, writes to Tarzan in the African jungles asking for a certain fever medicine,

which he could obtain from the flowers of a remote jungle. Boy pleads to be taken along and Tarzan, who loves Boy, finally acquiesces. On their way over, they come across a caravan of an American woman (Nancy Kelly) magician, with her retinue, carrying secretly a message to the head of an African tribe from the head of another tribe warning him of the fact that Hendrix (Otto Kruger) was a German agent, and that he was trying to foment strife between the two tribes. Tarzan mistakes the try-out of an act by which Nancy was supposed to be sawed in two, and, pouncing upon the supposed villains, frightens them away. With her horses gone, Nancy is compelled to join Tarzan and his co-travellers. Soon the four come upon some Arabs trying to capture Jaynar, a stallion, and Tarzan beats them and compels them to free him. Jaynar insists on following them. Thus they are compelled to take Jaynar along. The group reach the city of the Sheik, but Hendrix causes the arrest of Tarzan for horse stealing. While Tarzan is in jail, Nancy makes contact with Prince Selim (Robert Lowry), son of the Sheik, and she delivers to him the secret message, secreted in a bracelet. After her departure, Cheta enters and steals the bracelet. Hendrix and his henchmen murder the Prince, and because Nancy was the last person seen in the Prince's company, they cause her arrest. She is condemned to hang. Tarzan, with the aid of Boy and Cheta, escapes, finds Jaynar, mounts him, rushes to the place of execution, and carries her away. They reach the forest of the fever flowers, but they are followed by Hendrix and his henchmen. Boy, who had entered a cave with Nancy to hide, is caught in the web of a giant spider. Hendrix and his henchmen enter the cave, but they are caught in the tentacles of the giant spider and killed. But Tarzan reaches the spot in time to rescue Boy and Nancy.

The screen play has been founded on Edgar Rice Burroughs' writings. Sol Lesser produced it, and William Thiele directed it, from a story by Carroll Young, and a screen play by Edward T. Lowe. Some others in the cast are Lloyd Corrigan, Frank Puglia and Phil Van Zandt.

**"Rookies in Burma" with
Wally Brown and Alan Carney**

(RKO, no release date set; time, 63 min.)

Poor! This second in the series of program army life comedies featuring Wally Brown and Alan Carney (the first was "Adventures of a Rookie") is nonsensical and tiresome. Every one in the cast struggles against poor dialogue and ridiculous slapstick situations, and the total effect, as far as the spectator is concerned, is just boredom. As a matter of fact the comedy is so completely stupid it is irksome. At best, the film is up to the intelligence of ten-year-old children. It is two reel stuff stretched to feature length:—

When the Japanese attack their regiment's position, Wally Brown and Alan Carney, rookies, decide to distinguish themselves by capturing a machine gun nest. By the time they formulate their plan they find themselves prisoners of the enemy. Taken to a prison camp, they find that Erford Gage, their tough sergeant, had been captured while searching for them. Together with Gage, the boys plot to escape. The trio manage to overpower their guards and, changing into Japanese uniforms, ride out of camp in an enemy truck. Their escape is discovered, and the Japanese give chase. After many narrow escapes the three men

manage to reach a Burmese village. There, in a cafe, they meet Joan Barclay and Claire Carleton, two American dancers who had been trying to escape to India. The boys rig up an elephant and, taking the girls with them, continue their flight. As they near the American lines, their Japanese pursuers catch up with them, and they are forced to abandon the elephant. They make their way to the outskirts of a Japanese military camp and, disguised in their Japanese uniforms, manage to steal an enemy tank. After a series of harrowing events in which they are fired upon by the Japanese on the one hand, and by the Americans on the other, the boys finally make their identities known, thus gaining the safety of the American lines. They are decorated for bravery and assigned to peel potatoes.

Edward James wrote the screen play, Bert Gilroy produced it, and Leslie Goodwins directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Pistol Packin' Mama" with Ruth Terry,
Robert Livingston, Wally Vernon
and Jack LaRue**

(Republic, December 12; time, 64 min.)

Because of the popularity of the Al Dexter song on which the story has been based, the picture should draw large crowds to the box-office. The story is interesting, and is acted with skill. There are some comedy situations, and some that cause mild thrills. The picture has been produced lavishly, the settings being beautiful and the photography sharp and soothing. Ruth Terry is believable as the gun-toting dame, and Robert Livingston is so handsome that the ladies should go for him. Wally Vernon contributes most of what comedy there is:—

When eastern gangsters attempt to hold up the Golden Palace, a Nevada gambling casino, Ruth Terry, the owner, known as "Pistol Packin' Mama," because of her ability to handle guns and rough customers, disarms them and throws them out. Robert Livingston, a gambler, reads about Ruth and decides to try his luck at her casino. By using loaded dice, he is able to break the bank. After his departure, Ruth examines the dice and realizes that she had been cheated. Livingston goes to New York and opens a swank night-club with the money he had won crookedly. Ruth hears about it, goes to New York and obtains a job as a singer in the club while Livingston was away in Florida. When Livingston returns, Ruth, at the point of a gun, makes him deed the night-club over to her. Ruth induces him to continue as her manager, under threat of disgracing him. Livingston eventually falls in love with her. A society play-boy becomes infatuated with Ruth, and she eventually accepts him. Livingston takes it hard. Jack LaRue and his gang, believing that the club was still owned by Livingston, tries to muscle in. Livingston, unwilling to admit that Ruth had taken the club away from him, refuses to deal with LaRue. The gang beats him badly, and takes him for a ride. Learning that Livingston was in grave danger, Ruth grabs her pistols, invades LaRue's night-club, and rescues Livingston. Ruth endorses her bill of sale of the club over to Livingston and departs for the west. When Livingston finds the endorsed bill, he follows her. He finds the Golden Palace closed down and decides to open it again. As he meddles with the piano keys, Ruth appears from behind and starts shooting her pistols. Livingston rushes to her to embrace her.

Eddy White produced it, and Frank Woodruff directed it, from an original story by Arthur Ceasar and Edward Dein, and a screen play by Edward Dein and Fred Schiller.

Not bad for the family trade, even though gangsterism is involved in the plot.

**"Crime Doctor's Strangest Case"
with Warner Baxter**

(Columbia, Dec. 9; time, 69 min.)

This second in the "Crime Doctor" series of program mystery melodramas should satisfy the followers of this type of entertainment. The story is somewhat complicated, and it never leads up to any real excitement, but it manages to hold one fairly tense, because the actions of several of the characters place them under suspicion of guilt, and it is not until the end that the identity of the murderer is made known. Warner Baxter, who enacts again the role of a psychiatrist and crime expert, awakens sympathy by his efforts to clear an innocent person. The atmosphere is pretty heavy throughout, because of the lack of comedy relief:—

Lloyd Bridges, an ex-convict, who had been rehabilitated by Warner Baxter, comes to the psychiatrist's office with Lynn Merrick, his sweetheart, to ask his advice about their intended marriage. Baxter is disturbed to learn that Bridges was employed as a secretary to a retired real estate operator; when last employed in a similar position, Bridges' employer had died of poisoning. Bridges had been tried for the murder and acquitted. Curious as to why the retired man had hired Bridges when no one else would, Baxter visits the man's home only to learn that he had just died of poisoning. Virginia Brissac, the housekeeper, mistakes Baxter as a police doctor and invites him into the house. In the victim's bedroom, Baxter finds Rose Hobart, the widow; Sam Flint, a brother; Reginald Denny, a nephew; and Gloria Dickson, the cook. As Baxter questions the group, the police arrive and arrest Bridges because of his criminal record. Bridges, however, escapes. Believing in Bridges' innocence, Baxter decides to investigate. When Miss Brissac complains that she suffers from a state of mental confusion, Baxter invites her to his office. There, he places her under an hypnotic spell and learns that, years previously, she had been a dancer in a cafe owned by the dead man and a partner. The two men had quarreled and, shortly thereafter, the partner had supposedly disappeared with \$50,000. Baxter learns also that the cook was the daughter of the missing partner. From Miss Brissac's story Baxter gathers that most every one in the household had a motive for the crime. He pays a visit to the old, abandoned cafe, and there finds Flint, the brother, murdered. As he investigates further, he finds evidence indicating that he had scared the murderer away. He arranges with the police to publicize the fact that Bridges had committed the crime, hoping that the real criminal will return to the cafe. The trick works, and Denny is apprehended. He confesses that both he and Flint were after the \$50,000, which the dead man, after murdering his partner, had hidden in a secret safe in the cafe. Flint had murdered his brother, and Denny had murdered Flint. His name cleared, Bridges resumes his life with Lynn.

Eric Taylor wrote the screen play, Rudolph C. Flothow produced it, and Eugene J. Forde directed it. The cast includes Barton MacLane, Jerome Cowan, Constance Worth and others.

Not for children.

theatres in the boom areas are concerned, there is an equally large tax fallacy here. In practically all cases these theatres are corporations. In most cases, the towns were over-seated and theatres were having a hand-to-mouth existence prior to the war boom. For the years 1936 to 1939, which constituted the base for the computation of normal taxes, at the point of which excess profits taxes were computed, most of these theatres enjoyed a very slight profit, and, therefore, the tax base for normal purposes is very low as compared with their present income.

"Therefore, if the theatre owner is now forced to absorb the increased 10 per cent in admission taxes out of his share of the total admission price, this will be taken off his profits.

"In other words, the 10 percent removed from the theatre profits will be remitted to the Federal Government as admission tax and will be taken off the net return for income tax and excess profits tax purposes. This means that in this case these so-called 'profits,' of which the Government receives a minimum of 80 percent and in many cases as much as 90 per cent of the increase, would be merely a transferring of the funds from the pocket labeled 'income taxes' — to the pocket labeled admission taxes.

"It would not constitute any appreciable return as anticipated by these proponents of the measure and it would merely constitute an added burden on the tax structure of the theatre. Moreover, it might cause an actual reduction of attendance, and, therefore, reduce the return of tax dollars, as the theatre owner, in absorbing this tax, finds it necessary to reduce the quality of his attraction and, therefore, reduce the drawing power."

Every exhibitor organization is doing its utmost to arouse their members and other exhibitors to act at once so as to convince the members of the U. S. Senate Finance Committee that the increasing of the ticket tax from 1c for each 10c ticket or fraction to 2c will prove ruinous to the industry. It is now up to each exhibitor to do his part, and to do it at once; there is no time to lose.

"Higher and Higher" with Michelle Morgan, Jack Haley and Frank Sinatra

(RKO, no release date set; time, 91 min.)

A pretty good musical comedy. The story, which is based on the musical stage play of the same title, is thin, but for the most part it is gay and tuneful, although somewhat nonsensical. The film's chief attraction is Frank Sinatra, whose success as a "crooner" has been phenomenal. While Sinatra is hardly the romantic type, no one will deny that he sings pleasantly. And his fans will certainly be pleased, for he sings several songs. Sinatra takes quite a bit of good-natured kidding throughout the picture. The surprise of the picture is Michelle Morgan; she establishes herself as a first-rate comedienne in the role of a scullery maid, who impersonates a debutante. The story has little human appeal, for the actions of the characters are not sympathetic:—

Leon Errol, a prominent socialite, informs his house servants that he is bankrupt, and that his mansion would be repossessed in thirty days, unless he could meet a payment on the mortgage. This gives Jack Haley, the valet, an idea: Recalling that Errol's debutante daughter and his estranged wife had been in Switzerland for many years, Haley suggests that Michelle Morgan, the scullery maid, pose as Errol's daughter, so that she may marry a wealthy man and save the mansion. Since none of Errol's friends had seen his daughter for years, Haley felt that the deception would work. Errol approves the scheme, and the servants agree to provide funds for Michelle's clothes. Paul Hartman, the butler, arranges to have Michelle sponsor the Butler's Ball. Something goes wrong, for when the ball opens up, it has two sponsors — Michelle and Barbara Hale, a rival debutante. Victor Borge, a crook posing as a wealthy nobleman, who had escorted Barbara to the Ball, is attracted

to Michelle. Haley, unaware of Borge's true status, orders Michelle to set her cap for him. Michelle, who loved Haley secretly, rebelliously obeys. Meanwhile Frank Sinatra, a neighbor, becomes interested in Michelle, but only as a friend. A wedding date is set for Michelle and Borge, but on the eve of the wedding Haley realizes that she was unhappy and that he loved her himself. He breaks up the wedding by revealing her identity and, thinking she was in love with Sinatra, leaves town. Months later, Haley learns of Sinatra's engagement to Barbara. He returns to avenge Michelle, only to learn that he was the only man she ever cared for. Errol's mansion is saved by the discovery of a secret wine cellar, which the servants turn into a successful nightclub.

Jay Dratler and Ralph Spence wrote the screen play, and Tim Whelan produced and directed it. The cast includes Mary McGuire, Mary Wickes, Elisabeth Risdon, Grace Hartman, Dooley Wilson and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"What a Woman!" with Rosalind Russell, Brian Aherne and Willard Parker

(Columbia, Dec. 28; time, 94 min.)

Despite the familiarity of the plot, this comedy is a very good entertainment, suitable for all types of adult audiences. Although somewhat sophisticated in theme, it should be enjoyed by the masses, for the action is fast, the dialogue witty, and many of the situations are hilarious. The leading players enact their respective parts with zest and they give to the production a breezy and enjoyable quality. Once again Rosalind Russell is cast as an ultra-modern career-woman, a part that seems to suit her particular talents very well. An added attraction for women is the beautiful clothes Miss Russell wears. Some of her gowns are fantastic, but on her they look good. A newcomer who will bear watching is Willard Parker; he is young and handsome, and performs well:—

Having sold the motion picture rights to a sensational novel, Rosalind Russell, a successful Hollywood agent, has difficulty in finding an actor who can meet the requirements of the novel's hero. Added to her troubles is the constant presence of Brian Aherne, a magazine writer, who had been assigned to write a story about her life. On a hint from Aherne, Rosalind decides to visit the novel's author, who had used a pen name, in the hope that he may be the man to play his own hero. The author (Willard Parker) turns out to be a youthful, handsome college professor, the perfect screen type. Disturbed because he had been found out as the author of a sensational novel, Parker vetoes a screen career. But Rosalind, through a clever trick, gets him into trouble with the dean. Thus he decides to accept her offer. After a gruelling training course, Parker takes a screen test. It is a dismal failure. Disheartened, he plans to return to school. Meanwhile Aherne had come to the conclusion that Rosalind's career kept her from behaving like a normal woman. Purely as an experiment, he talks Parker into feeling a great love for Rosalind. This makes a new personality of Parker, and he is hailed by the press as a new screen hero. Although not in love with Parker, Rosalind does not tell him so lest he walk out on his contract. Aherne enjoys her predicament until he himself falls in love with her. To escape Parker's amorosness, Rosalind goes into hiding. Parker, however, finds her, and announces their coming marriage. Trapped, Rosalind allows the wedding plans to be made. Piqued when Aherne tells her that he feels sorry for Parker, because she is not a normal woman, Rosalind cancels the wedding, informing Parker that he may break the contract if he wishes to. Her tirade over, she rushes into Aherne's arms.

Therese Lewis and Barry Trivers wrote the screen play, and Irving Cummings produced and directed it. The cast includes Alan Dinehart, Ann Savage and others.

There are no objectionable situations.

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18, 1943

No. 51

IS ARBITRATION IN THIS INDUSTRY BANKRUPT?

Arbitration is undoubtedly the best method of settling business disputes, for it is generally inexpensive, and can effect a settlement in the shortest time possible, provided it is conducted fairly.

When arbitration was first introduced in this industry in 1926, the producers so controlled it that the District Court for the Southern New York District declared the system then used illegal.

For several years afterwards there was no organized arbitration in the industry. Only now and then a case was arbitrated, but it was done individually.

When the Government brought arbitration again by means of the Consent Decree, we all hoped that it would be carried on so fairly that there would be no complaint. Unfortunately such has not been the case.

In going over a copy of the Pacific Coast Conference's survey, which has been submitted to the Department of Justice, I read the following:

"One of the first (cases) on the Pacific Coast to be taken to the Appeal Board was Piedmont Theatre, Inc., vs. Paramount Pictures, Inc., et al., decision and opinion No. 21.

"A brief resume of this representative case will demonstrate to the Department of Justice the reason independent exhibitors on the Pacific Coast chose to suffer the injustices practiced upon them rather than submit to Arbitration under the Consent Decree.

"This case involved a simple matter of Clearance. The transcript consisted of eight volumes—994 pages. A single copy cost the complainant \$372.85. Seven attorneys, thoroughly familiar with all of the technicalities of the motion picture industry, appeared against the complainant. On appeal complainant was faced with five more attorneys.

"The hearing lasted eight days—over the period from October 28, 1941, to and including November 18, 1941. The defendants and intervenors introduced 89 exhibits, to complainant's 15. If there had been no interruptions, complainant could have put in its case in one-half day. Its evidence, under such circumstances, would have filled a great deal less than one volume of the transcript. Much of the transcript consists of discussion between counsel with respect to technicalities raised by attorneys for defendants and intervenors in regard to a proper interpretation of the language of the Consent Decree.

"The arbitrator, Mr. Donovan O. Peters, one of the leading lawyers on the Pacific Coast, personally and at his own expense, examined the theatres involved and checked conflicting facts. He found, as a matter of fact, that the clearance complained of as applied by defendant distributors to complainant's

theatre was unreasonable. As a result of this finding of fact, the arbitrator then proceeded to set the maximum clearance. Although there was a material conflict upon each of the issues involved, the Appeal Board, sitting 3000 miles from the theatres and the area involved, reversed the arbitrator's findings of fact, and by so doing violated one of the most fundamental rules of appellate procedure.

"After winning the case, the complainant, of course, felt justified in fighting the appeal taken by certain of the defendants and intervenors. Complainant was thereby forced to answer the numerous briefs filed against it.

"A conservative estimate of complainant's costs, including complainant's share of shorthand and reporters' fees, expenses of witnesses, exhibits, cost of filing appeal, cost of printing briefs on appeal and reasonable attorneys' fees, would be \$1500.

"The Department of Justice asked for the actual experiences of independent theatre exhibitors under the Consent Decree. The above is one concrete example of arbitration under the Consent Decree. It is little wonder that, after learning of the experiences of this exhibitor, the other independent exhibitors came to the conclusion that arbitration was not an easy, inexpensive method for settling their disputes."

Thus arbitration is again perverted to the benefit of the distributors. How can an exhibitor afford to hire five or six attorneys to face an equal number of attorneys hired by the distributors? And how many exhibitors can afford so much cost for each case?

Any wonder that the exhibitors avoid arbitration?


EXCHANGES UP AGAINST EMPLOYEE SHORTAGE

If you should happen to find a reel from another picture in the picture you are showing, don't be surprised. The exchanges are so short of help, particularly in the film inspection rooms, that anything may happen.

Lately they have been employing in all departments women, but their employment in the film inspection rooms does not help much, for they lack the necessary experience.

Every exhibitor understands, of course, what it means to employ inexperienced film menders; the patching is done faultily, and scenes are found where they do not belong.

It would be wise for the careful exhibitors to have their projectionist inspect the films before showing, watching the code numbers that are printed on the side of the film, outside the sprocket holes; they can detect any misplaced scene that way.


Harrison's Reports wishes its subscribers and readers the greetings of the season.

"The Spider Woman" with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce

(Universal, Jan. 21; time, 62 min.)

This latest of the Sherlock Holmes murder mystery melodramas is moderately entertaining program fare. Like the other pictures in the series, this, too, has a far-fetched plot, and the unravelling of the mystery depends not on logic, but on the master detective's amazing powers of deduction. Since it is obvious from the start who the criminals are, the interest lies, not in the discovery of their identities, but in the manner in which they are apprehended:—

In an effort to solve a series of mysterious suicides, which he believed to be the work of a diabolical murder ring, Sherlock Holmes (Basil Rathbone) makes it appear as if he had drowned on a fishing trip. When the newspapers publicize his "demise," Holmes disguises himself as an Indian Prince and contrives to meet Adrea Spedding (Gale Sondergaard) at a gambling club, which was a noted hang-out for criminals. After suffering heavy losses, Holmes confides to Adrea that he could not meet his obligations. Adrea, feigning sympathy, directs him to a friend who would loan him money on his life insurance. Certain that she belonged to a murder ring that loaned its victims money and then murdered them to collect the insurance, Holmes arranges to become a borrower. That night, aided by Dr. Watson (Nigel Bruce), his old friend, Holmes waits in his own home for the inruder ring to strike. His intuition proves correct, for, soon after midnight, a gigantic spider enters his bedroom through an air duct, and leaps upon a wax likeness of himself. Killing the spider, Holmes takes it to a noted entomologist who identifies the insect as a deadly *Lycosa Carnivera*, whose venom caused so much unbearable agony that the victim is lead to self-destruction. The following day, Adrea, who had become aware of Holmes' masquerade as an Indian, makes an unsuccessful attempt on his life. Through bits of evidence, which he gathers during his investigation, Holmes deduces that Adrea's gang committed the murders with the aid of a pygmy. He locates a carnival in London, where a pygmy act had one of the concessions, and there, with the aid of Dr. Watson, manages to round up the gang, thus solving London's suicide murders.

Bertram Millhauser wrote the screen play, and Roy William Neill produced and directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"What a Man" with Johnny Downs and Wanda McKay

(Monogram, Dec. 23; time, 73 min.)

Based on the familiar "worm that turns" theme, this routine program comedy will probably get by as a supporting feature in small-town and neighborhood theatres. Little originality has been put into the story or the treatment and, except for a rousing fist fight towards the finish, the action is slow. Johnny Downs, as the meek clerk who eventually becomes masterful, and Wanda McKay, as the girl he wins, handle their assignments competently, but there is little they can do with the weak story material:—

Johnny Downs, a timid bachelor working for a drug firm, becomes involved with the police when a gangster is killed on the doorstep of his home. The police inform him that the gangster's moll had escaped, and search his home. Meanwhile Wanda McKay, a mysterious young lady with a suitcase, had taken refuge in the house secretly, hiding in a closet. The following morning, Downs discovers her sleeping on a couch. Wanda, to prevent his getting rid of her, feigns illness. He permits her to remain. Downs eventually falls in love with her, although still under the impression that she was the dead gangster's moll. Under her guidance, he slowly rids himself of his timid nature. Meanwhile at the office, Downs' firm had been undergoing an investigation. The investigators learn that Downs had submitted a reorganization plan to the office manager, but it had been turned down. Pleased with the plan, the investigators oust the manager and appoint Downs in his place. Downs arrives home jubilant to inform Wanda of the appointment,

only to find that she had left for an unknown destination, accompanied by Robert Kent, the firm's smart-alecky salesman. Downs' efforts to locate both Wanda and Kent are unavailing. Weeks later, when Kent returns to the office, Downs accuses him of running off with Wanda. Kent protests that he had only given her a lift to the station, but Downs doubts him and gives him a thrashing. Returning home, Downs finds Joan and the head of his firm waiting for him. He learns that Joan is his daughter, and that she had taken refuge in his home to hide valuable papers, which some men in the firm sought to destroy. The situation straightened out, Downs proposes to Joan and becomes the boss' son-in-law.

William X. Crowley and Beryl Sachs wrote the screen play, Barney A. Sarecky produced it, and William Beaudine directed it. The cast includes Etta McDaniels and others. Morally suitable for all.

"The Desert Song" with Dennis Morgan, Irene Manning and Bruce Cabot

(Warner Bros. no release date set; time, 96 min.)

From a production point of view, "The Desert Song," which has been photographed in Technicolor, is an artistic achievement. As entertainment, it is better than fair, and it should please class audiences, as well as the rank and file. Since none of the players mean much at the box-office, its fate will depend entirely on the popularity of the operetta, which for years has been famed for its musical score. Produced once before in 1929 by Warners, the story has been changed substantially, bringing this version up to date (1939) by presenting the cruelty of the government forces against the Riffs as the result of Nazi intrigue to gain control of Dakar. The hero, who in the old version was the son of a French officer, is now shown as an American. The story itself is nothing to brag about, but it serves as a framework for the music, which is sung pleasantly by Dennis Morgan and Irene Manning, Lynn Overman, now deceased, provides some mildly effective comedy as an inebriated American correspondent. There is a fair amount of excitement caused by the battles between the Riffs and the French troops, and one is held in suspense by the manner in which Morgan continuously evades capture, keeping his identity a secret.

In the development of the plot, Morgan, an American pianist, in Morocco, learns that a syndicate of German bankers were financing a railroad project designed to link a North African city with Dakar. Victor Francen, a powerful Moroccan, who had the contract to supply workmen for the project, was bribing Bruce Cabot, a French Colonel, to smoke the Riff tribesmen out of the hills and to force them to toil as slaves on the hot desert. Cabot, however, was unaware that Francen was backed by German interests. Morgan becomes the secret leader of the Riffs, and constantly harrasses their captors by raiding the desert camps and freeing the enslaved men. Prodded by Francen, Cabot and his soldiers carry on a futile search for the Riffs' mysterious leader, but Morgan, plying his trade as a pianist, manages to deceive them. Meanwhile both Cabot and Morgan fall in love with Irene Manning, French singer in a cafe. To lure Cabot and his troops into a trap, Morgan kidnaps Irene and reveals his identity to her. She understands his motives and falls in love with him. Irene, through an unwitting remark, reveals Morgan's secret to Cabot. Confronted by Cabot, Morgan tries to convince him that by serving Francen's interests he is really an unwitting tool of the Nazis. Together they go to Francen's palace and discover conclusive proof of Morgan's claims. Convinced, Cabot intercedes with his government and restores all rights and liberties to the Riff tribes.

The story is based on the play by Lawrence Schwab, Otto Harbach, Oscar Hammerstein 2nd, Sigmund Romberg and Frank Mandel. Robert Buckner produced it, and Robert Florey directed it. The cast includes Gene Lockhart, Faye Emerson, Jack LaRue, Felix Basch and many others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Drums of Fu Manchu" with
Harry Brandon, William Royle
and Robert Kellard**

(Republic, Nov. 27; time, 68 min.)

A "wild" program action melodrama. Originally released in 1940 as a fifteen chapter serial, "Drums of Fu Manchu" has been cut and re-edited to feature length. From beginning to end the serial-like action is filled with fantastic heroics and hairbreadth escapes, with the hero and the villain gaining the upper hand alternately, until the final reel when the villain is brought to justice. It is all quite preposterous but it should find favor with the Saturday matinee juvenile trade, as well as with the avid action fans, to whom story detail is of no importance.

The story revolves around the machinations of Dr. Fu Manchu (Harry Brandon), a sinister oriental, who, as head of a secret organization known as Si Fan, seeks to foment war in Central Asia and to secure world domination during the subsequent upheaval. In order to stage his revolution successfully he must secure the long-lost sceptre of Ghengis Kahn, so that the Himalayans will accept him as the authentic New World conqueror. Learning of Fu Manchu's plan, the British Foreign Office assigns Sir Nayland Smith (William Royle) to find the sceptre and to foil Fu Manchu's diabolical plot. Smith allies himself with James Parker (George Cleveland), an eminent American archaeologist, who had information that would lead them to the lost sceptre. Fu Manchu learns of this and kills Parker. Allan Parker (Robert Kellard), the archaeologist's son, joins forces with Smith to avenge his father's death. After a series of hair-raising incidents, in which both parties vie with each other, Fu Manchu locates the sceptre and incites the Himalayans to riot. But Alan manages to recover the sceptre, proves to the Himalayans that Fu Manchu's power is false, and destroys forever the oriental's threat of aggression.

Six writers collaborated on the screen play, which is based on the novel by Sax Rohmer. Hiram S. Brown, Jr. produced it, and William Witney and John English co-directed it. The cast includes Gloria Franklin, Tom Chaterton, Luana Walters and others.

Morally suitable for all.

**"The Mad Ghoul" with George Zucco,
David Bruce and Evelyn Ankers**

(Universal, Nov. 5; time, 65 min.)

A routine program horror melodrama. It is another one of those fantastic stories that deal with ghoulish creatures who desecrate graves in order that they might live. The theme has been done many times, and this version offers little in the way of originality. It should, nevertheless, satisfy the horror-picture fans, for it contains all the ingredients generally associated with films of this type—midnight visits to cemeteries in the usual eerie surroundings; a special gas that changes a man's features in the Jekyll-Hyde manner; and a mad scientist who guides the weird happenings. Discriminating audiences will probably find it tiresome:—

Having discovered a gas that caused one's body to die but the mind to remain alive, without a will of its own, Professor George Zucco informs David Bruce, a surgery student, that his discovery opened up a new field of research. Bruce becomes his assistant and, experimenting with monkeys, proves that the heart fluid of a recently deceased monkey will cure a monkey that had been subjected to the gas. The cure, however, was temporary. Bruce finds it difficult to concentrate on his work because of his love for Evelyn Ankers, a concert singer, who was preparing to leave on tour. Evelyn loved Turhan Bey, her pianist, but did not tell Bruce lest she hurt him. She confides in Zucco who, being infatuated with her himself, promises to arrange for Bruce to forget her. Zucco places Bruce under the influence of the gas, and the young man takes on a ghoulish appearance, becoming a subject to Zucco's will. Under Zucco's guidance Bruce goes to a cemetery, exhumes a newly buried body, and removes the heart. Zucco uses it to restore the young man's health.

Unaware of what he had been through, Bruce, accompanied by Zucco, follows Evelyn. When he finds her and discovers that she loved Bey, he suffers a mental relapse and again turns into a ghoul. Zucco, determined to have Evelyn for himself, keeps Bruce alive by periodical visits to a cemetery, and follows her from city to city, waiting for an opportunity to order Bruce to kill Bey. Meanwhile the police, baffled by the grave-robbings, notice that these occur on subsequent nights in towns where Evelyn sings. They question her, and she in turn speaks to Bruce. Deducing that he had been victimized by Zucco, Bruce wrecks the laboratory and subjects both Zucco and himself to the gas. At Evelyn's concert that night, the transfigured Bruce attempts to kill Bey, but he is shot dead by the police. Zucco, now a ghoul, makes his way to a cemetery, but, lacking the strength to rob a grave, he dies.

Hans Kraly wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and James Hogan directed it. The cast includes Robert Armstrong, Milburn Stone and others.

Too horrifying for children.

**"Doughboys in Ireland" with Kenny Baker
and Jeff Donnell**

(Columbia, Oct. 7; time, 63 min.)

For those who enjoy Kenny Baker's singing, this modestly produced romantic comedy should prove acceptable program fare; the more discriminating, however, may become restless, for it is lacking in many respects. For one thing, the story is extremely thin; for another, it drags considerably in spots, becoming tiresome. The comedy, which is provoked by the offense taken by an Irish community when Kenny shows indifference to the romantic inclinations of an Irish lass, is mildly effective. A brief battle sequence towards the finish provides some excitement, but it has little bearing on the plot. Kenny's singing of several popular Irish ballads is very pleasant:—

On the eve of his induction into the army, Kenny Baker, a band leader, infatuated with Lynn Merrick a cabaret singer, receives her promise to wait for him. Lynn, a ruthless and insincere person, soon forgets Baker and arranges with her elderly secretary to reply to his letters. Baker is sent overseas to Ireland. There, Jeff Donnell, an Irish colleen, driving a donkey cart, is ordered off the camp grounds by Baker, who was on sentry duty. An argument ensues and Jeff departs. The irate colleen describes the incident to Harry Shannon, her blustering father, who rouses the community against the American soldiers. As a result, any soldier who as much as looked at an Irish girl was given a sound thrashing. Baker's buddies demand that he apologize to Jeff. He does such a good job of apologizing that the townspeople establish a canteen for the soldiers. Realizing that Jeff was in love with him and that a rebuff would bring the townspeople down on the soldiers once again, Baker makes it appear as if he loved her too. Lynn, however, remains uppermost in his thoughts. But Baker soon realizes that Lynn does not love him when she arrives at the camp to sing for the soldiers and gives him a casual greeting. Meanwhile Jeff, who had overheard a conversation revealing Baker's love for Lynn, is downhearted. Baker's unit is sent to France on a commando raid, and it is while his life is in danger that he realizes his love for Jeff. Though seriously wounded, Baker survives the raid and is hospitalized. His recovery complete, Baker is met at the hospital gates by Jeff, and he confesses his love for her.

Howard J. Green wrote the screen play, Jack Fier produced it, and Lew Landers directed it. The cast includes the Jesters.

Morally suitable for all.

**"Tarzan's Desert Mystery" with
Johnny Weissmuller, Nancy Kelly
and Johnny Sheffield**

(RKO, no release date set; time 70 min.)

This melodrama was reviewed in last week's issue. Through error, the title was reported as "Tarzan's Murder Mystery." The above title is correct.

"Charlie Chan in Secret Service" with Sidney Toler

(Monogram, Feb. 14; time, 64 min.)

A passable program murder mystery melodrama. It is the first in Monogram's contemplated series of Chan pictures, starring Sidney Toler, who played the role of Charlie Chan in the previous series, produced by 20th Century-Fox. The fact that the series has an established following may prove helpful at the box office. The plot follows the usual pattern of the Chan stories, in which the Chinese detective is both aided and interfered with by his well-meaning children, who help him to unravel the mystery. Comedy is provoked by Chan's bewilderment at the modern "jive" talk used by his children, and by the antics of Manton Moreland, a frightened colored chauffeur. Since the criminal's identity is not divulged until the finish, one's interest is held all the way through:—

James Melton, inventor of a secret war weapon for the government, is mysteriously murdered in his own home during a cocktail party, and the plans of the weapon are stolen from his pocket. Charlie Chan (Sidney Toler), a special F.B.I. agent, is assigned to investigate the murder. Marriane Quon and Benson Fong, Chan's 'teen-aged children, learn of the investigation and follow their father to Melton's home to help him solve the crime. At the house, Chan finds a motley array of people, who had gathered for the party, including several persons of foreign birth, whose presence in the United States is not explained to Chan's satisfaction. Included among the guests was Lelah Tyler, a scatter-brained widow, who constantly fretted about her pets at home not being fed and made a general nuisance of herself. As Chan carries on his investigation, one of the guests is murdered, and several attempts are made on his own life. But by the process of deduction and elimination, and a deliberate false accusation Chan succeeds in exposing Miss Tyler as the accomplice of the murdered guest, whom she had killed lest he reveal her identity to the clever detective. Chan also proves that the woman's dead accomplice had murdered Melton.

George Callahan wrote the screen play, Philip N. Krasne produced it, and Phil Rosen directed it. The cast includes Gwen Kenyon, Gene Stutenroth, Eddie Chandler and others. Morally suitable for all.

"The Woman of the Town" with Albert Dekker and Claire Trevor

(United Artists, Dec. 31; time, 90 min.)

Given better than average production values, this western-like drama shapes up as a good entertainment, strong enough to top a double bill. The story is based on the life of "Bat" Masterson, Dodge City's most famous marshal, and it revolves around his love for a kind-hearted dance-hall girl, and around his efforts to bring law and order to the unruly town. It has human interest, good comedy moments, a tender romance, which should appeal to women, and thrilling melodramatic situations for men. Albert Dekker, as Masterson, and Claire Trevor, as the girl he loves, win the spectator's sympathy; they make the characters they depict both likeable and believable. The ending where the heroine is accidentally shot to death, is tragic:—

Arriving in Dodge City in search of a newspaper job, "Bat" Masterson (Albert Dekker) finds himself appointed Marshal when he displays fearlessness in disarming a rowdy Texan. At church, where he had gone to keep order for the preacher (Percy Kilbride), Masterson meets Dora Hand (Claire Trevor), kindly entertainer in a local saloon, who, too, was a newcomer in town. Both are attracted to each other. With the arrival of King Kennedy (Barry Sullivan), a reckless millionaire cowboy, Masterson finds his authority challenged. A gun fight between the two is averted by the diplomatic intervention of Dora. Kennedy escorts Dora about town and eventually falls in love with her. He proposes marriage and tries to buy her contract from Dog Kelly (Porter Hall), the saloon keeper. When Kelly refuses, Kennedy insults the man and wounds him. Masterson runs

Kennedy out of town. Dora's kindness and her charities win for her the respect of the townspeople. Masterson asks her to marry him, informing her that he had been offered a job on a Kansas City newspaper. But Dora, who had obtained the job for him without his knowledge, could not accompany him, for she had promised her uncle, owner of the paper, never to return to Kansas City. Learning that Kennedy and his gang planned to return to town to kill Kelly, Masterson prepares to meet them. The gang storms into town and a battle ensues. In an exchange of shots between Kennedy and Masterson, the reckless cowboy wounds Dora mortally. As Dora dies she makes Masterson promise that he will never kill any one. Masterson eventually catches up with Kennedy and confronts him without his guns. Backed by the cowboy's own men, Masterson takes Kennedy back to town to stand trial. As the preacher reads the last rites at Dora's burial, Masterson lowers his guns into her grave.

Aeneas MacKenzie wrote the screen play, Harry Sherman produced it, and George Archainbaud directed it. The cast includes Marion Martin, Beryl Wallace, Teddie Sherman and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Calling Dr. Death" with Lon Chaney, Patricia Morison and J. Carrol Naish

(Universal, Dec. 17; time, 64 min.)

A good program murder mystery melodrama. It should prove a treat for the followers of this type of entertainment, for the identity of the murderer is concealed so well that when it is finally divulged it comes as a complete surprise. What makes it exciting is the fact that Lon Chaney, whose relations with his wife were strained, has a lapse of memory at the time of her murder and, because another man had been convicted of the crime on circumstantial evidence, Chaney suffers mentally in the belief that he himself might have committed the murder. His efforts to learn the truth hold one in suspense all the way through. There is no comedy, but this is to the picture's benefit, since comedy, unless done well, might have been out of place:—

Lon Chaney, a prominent neurologist, finds that the unfaithfulness of his wife (Ramsay Ames) is ruining their marriage, and that his love for her is slowly turning to hate. He seeks solace from Patricia Morison his attractive and sympathetic assistant. When Ramsay leaves for a week-end with David Bruce, Chaney, in a rage, follows them. He is found by Patricia on Monday morning, haggard and exhausted, asleep in his office. She questions him, but he is unable to recollect what had happened over the week-end. Police Inspector J. Carrol Naish arrives at the office with news that Ramsay had been found murdered. The police hold Bruce on the murder charge. Chaney, however, believes his protests of innocence, and thinks that perhaps he himself had murdered Ramsay during his mental lapse. Patricia, who had often assisted Chaney in practicing hypnotism on his mentally ill patients, persuades Chaney to let her put him to sleep so that he would speak from his subconscious mind and record his week-end activities. Chaney plays back the record and finds that he apparently had not committed the crime. Meanwhile Naish persistently shadows Chaney, indicating that he believed him guilty. On the night set for Bruce's electrocution, Chaney and Patricia go to the office with the doomed man on their minds. Nervous, Chaney dangles his watch from side to side, and the movement of the timepiece puts Patricia into an hypnotic state. Speaking from her subconscious mind, she reveals that she and Bruce had been blackmailing Ramsay, and that they had quarreled when Bruce, having fallen in love with her (Ramsay), had sought to compel her to return the blackmail money. Her resentment against this turn of events, and her own love for Bruce, had supplied the motive for the murder. As Chaney wakes Patricia from the trance, Naish steps from behind a curtain and arrests her. Bruce's execution is stayed.

Edward Dein wrote the screen play, Ben Pivar produced it, and Reginald Leborg directed it. The cast includes Fay Helm and others.

Not edifying for children.

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THE QUESTION OF A UNIFIED EXHIBITOR ORGANIZATION

At a luncheon given by him to the trade press at the Hotel Astor on December 2, Mr. William F. Rodgers, vice president and general sales manager of MGM, deplored the lack of a unified exhibitor organization for he believes that a unified exhibitor body can accomplish more than a disunited one. He deplored also the lack of exhibitor leadership.

Commenting on Mr. Rodgers' statement Mo Wax, Editor and Publisher of *Film Bulletin*, of Philadelphia, stated that he takes issue with Mr. Rodgers and expresses the opinion that it has not been lack of leadership in independent exhibitor ranks, but the producer support of "Quislings."

HARRISON'S REPORTS agrees with Mo Wax. There is no lack of leadership among the real independent exhibitors. Allied States Association of Motion Picture Exhibitors has done a fine job in protecting the interests not only of every independent exhibitor in the land, but also the entire industry. At no time has Allied refused to cooperate with the industry members from the other side of the fence when the industry was, either attacked, or threatened with taxation. In the present tax fight, it is the opinion of HARRISON'S REPORTS that it has done an effective fight. If the Senate Committee has been induced to change the original plan of taxing twenty per cent of the gross receipts, it is owed largely to the fight this organization has made. Left to the producers and distributors, a twenty and even higher per cent tax would have been imposed on the theatres.

Allied enjoys the confidence of all the exhibitors and most of the genuinely independent regional units. In appearing before the Senate Committee, Abram F. Myers, general counsel and chairman of the board of directors of Allied, represented, not only all the Allied units, but also a large number of non-Allied regional organizations. They entrusted the protection of their interests to the Allied leaders.

As Mr. Wax states, the inability of Allied to take in all the exhibitor units in its ranks is owed, not to lack of impressive leadership, but to the appointment of "Quislings" by the producer-distributors with the intent of dividing exhibitor membership for their own purpose. If they want a unified national exhibitor organization why do they continue subsidizing the national MPTOA?

The writer has often called to the attention of Mr. Rodgers the harm that the producers are doing to the interests of the entire industry by supporting "Quislings" and by using them to appear before legislative committees, local as well as national, to speak for them against the interests of the independent exhibitors.

An organization is strong and commands respect only if its membership consists of persons with identical interests. The interests of the main factors in MPTOA are not identical with those of the independent exhibitors, by reason of

the fact that the former operate circuits of theatres owned by producer-distributors. How can anyone unite these into one organization? It has been tried and has failed.

What we really need to protect the interests of the industry from attacks is, not one national exhibitor body, taking in all the exhibitors, regardless of affiliations, but a national body whose membership consists only of independent exhibitors. Such a body will, HARRISON'S REPORTS feels sure, cooperate with the distributor organizations whenever there is a threat to the interests of the entire industry. There is no use asking the independent exhibitors to give up their efforts at reforms, either through legislation or through an appeal to the public, when the producers refuse to effect reforms for the removal of rank abuses.

THE FOURTH WAR LOAN DRIVE

Organization for the Fourth War Loan Drive, under the national chairmanship of Charles P. Skouras, has already been effected, and the plans are set up.

At a luncheon given by Mr. Skouras at the St. Moritz Hotel, in New York, in honor of the trade press, he put forward the slogan of one bond for every theatre seat in the country. Prizes will be offered to those exhibitors who sell a bond for every one of their seats.

During the luncheon, B. V. Sturdivant, campaign director, emphasized the importance of the trade press in the bond campaigns and stated that the present drive must have the same and even greater support from the press in order that it may succeed fully. And needless to say that every one of the editors present pledged his whole-hearted support.

Frank H. Ricketson, vice president of Fox Intermountain Theatres, of Denver, has been appointed vice chairman, and Andrew Krappman and Fred Stein, assistant directors.

Mr. Skouras is visiting some of the big cities to lay the foundations for the drive. In describing the industry's goal at the luncheon Mr. Skouras said that, in the Third War Loan, many theatres far exceeded the number of their seats in Bond sales, but this time the sales must exceed the theatre seats in every theatre in the country. It is not impossible that this be done. But even if it were, he felt that the picture industry would do it, for it has behind it a fine record of accomplishments. He expressed the belief that every man, woman and child will help to make the Fourth War Loan Drive as good a success as the last drive.

Advisory committees in the different zones have already been chosen.

HARRISON'S REPORTS has no doubt that every theatre owner in the country will do his best to make the Fourth War Loan a success. It is the best way for them to support the soldiers fighting for the preservation of our liberties and of our way of living.

"Gung Ho!" with Randolph Scott

(Universal, Dec. 31; time, 88 min.)

Fairly good. It is a virile documentary-like war melodrama, extolling the heroism of Colonel Evan Carlson's Marine Raiders, who, after months of intensive and strenuous training, wiped out superior Japanese forces in a daring commando raid on Makin Island. It is a well produced film, filled with exciting battle action, but it offers little that has not been seen in equally good war pictures. Its subject matter, however, lends itself to exploitation, because of the wide publicity given to the recent occupation of Makin by the Marines. The film is marred by the unnecessary injection of a romantic angle concerning two half-brothers, who feud over the same girl. Although the romance with the feud is a very minor part of the action, it gives an otherwise sincere story a synthetic Hollywood touch:—

Volunteers are requested for a special battalion of Marine Raiders to be trained for a particular mission. Among those who offer their services are Noah Beery, Jr., and David Bruce, half-brothers; Alan Curtis, an ordained minister; and Sam Levene, a veteran Marine. Under the command of Col. Randolph Scott and Lieutenant J. Carrol Naish, the men go through months of gruelling training, unaware of what their mission will be. Their training completed, the men board two submarines outfitted with special landing equipment, and they learn that their mission is the destruction of military installations on Japanese-held Makin Island. En route, the submarines are attacked by Jap planes, but they manage to survive the raid. Makin Island is reached in the hours before dawn, and Scott orders an immediate attack, informing the men that they have between the hours of dawn and nightfall to complete their task. A Jap sentry discovers the Raiders pouring onto the beach and gives the alarm. Profiting by their long training as guerrillas, the Raiders establish a beachhead after a furious jungle battle with Jap snipers and machine-gunners. Outnumbered five to one, the Raiders, under Scott's able leadership, systematically demolish the enemy's positions. When the Japanese radio their air force for support, Scott, through a clever ruse, deceives the Jap planes into bombing their own forces. Learning that a Jap task force is speeding towards Makin, Scott orders his men to return to the subs. Their mission accomplished, though suffering heavy casualties, the Raiders head for home.

Lucien Hubbard wrote the screen play from the factual story "Gung Ho!" by Lt. W. S. Le Francois, USMC. Walter Wanger produced it, and Ray Enright directed it. The cast includes Grace McDonald, Peter Coc, Milburn Stone, Bob Mitchum, Rod Cameron and others.

Morally suitable for all.

"Swing Out the Blues" with Bob Haymes, Lynn Merrick and The Vagabonds

(Columbia, Dec. 23; time, 71 min.)

For those patrons who enjoy comedies with "swing" music, regardless of story values, this should prove passable program fare; discriminating audiences, however, will find it tiresome, for the story is up to the intelligence of small children, and the comedy situations are inane. Throughout the action the characters murder the English language with "jive" talk, which, though amusing when heard once, becomes boring by repetition. The picture's bright spots are the comical musical arrangements of popular songs as sung by The Vagabonds, a comedy quartet, but even they wear out their welcome by their constant presence on the screen. Another drawback is the fact that none of the players means anything at the box-office:—

The Vagabonds (Pete Peterson, Till Rizzo, Al Torrieri and Don Germano), a musical quartet, and Bob Haymes, a singer, live a hand-to-mouth existence. Janis Carter, an agent, obtains a one-night stand for them, to play chamber music at the debut party of Lynn Merrick. Just before the

boys arrive at the party, Lynn turns down a marriage proposal from John Eldridge, the man her aunt (Kathleen Howard) had chosen for her husband. Lynn announces that she is twenty-one and that she will marry whom she pleases—the first man, in fact, who walks into the house. Haymes is the first man to walk in, and Lynn marries him that night. On the following morning, Haymes learns Lynn's reason for marrying him and leaves her. Lynn follows him to New York and effects a reconciliation. Meanwhile Janis, who loved Haymes, determines to break up the marriage, threatening to ruin Haymes' career unless the marriage is annulled. Haymes tries to humor Janis by seeing her often, but Lynn learns of their meetings and quarrels with him. Angry, Haymes leaves her and disappears. The Vagabonds insist that Lynn stay with them. Lynn has a baby and, shortly thereafter, her wealthy aunt threatens to obtain permission from the court to give the child a proper home. It all turns out well when Haymes returns in an R.A.F. uniform and begs Lynn's forgiveness.

Dorcas Cochran wrote the screen play, Mal St. Clair directed it, and Sam White produced it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Klondike Kate" with Ann Savage, Tom Neal and Glenda Farrell

(Columbia, Dec. 16; time, 64 min.)

A routine program melodrama, suitable for those who like their entertainment rough and bawdy. Supposedly based on the life of Mrs. Kate Rockwood Matson, the "Klondike Kate" of the Alaskan gold-rush days, the story is a trite and conventional tale of a young woman who arrives in the lawless territory and becomes the favorite dance-hall queen of the sordidness. Although the setting is Alaska, the story has nothing to do with the gold-rush; most of the action takes place in a typical gambling palace. There are the usual dance-hall brawls for excitement and a threatened lynching for suspense. The story itself is somewhat unpleasant, for the actions of the main characters are motivated by hate and revenge. The musical interludes and the comedy situations are fair:—

Arriving in Totem Pole, a lawless Klondike town, to claim a gambling casino left her by her father, Ann Savage learns that Tom Neal, a gambler, operated the casino. Neal refuses to recognize her claim, maintaining that he had bought the casino from her father's partner. Ann takes Neal to court, but soon gives up in disgust when she learns that her attorney, Neal's lawyer, and the presiding judge are one and the same person. Sensing that Neal had developed a romantic interest in her, Ann secures employment at the casino as a singer, hoping for an opportunity to avenge herself against Neal. Meanwhile Glenda Farrell and her troupe of dance girls had arrived in town to work for Sheldon Leonard, a rival casino owner, but Neal, by offering Glenda more money, had induced her to work for him. Planning to get even with Neal, Leonard plots with Constance Worth, whom Neal had forsaken for Ann, to hide a marked deck of cards in Neal's casino. The following day, Leonard visits Neal and offers to bet his casino against Neal's on the turn of a card. Neal accepts. Upon losing, Neal discovers that the cards are marked. He challenges Leonard, but Ann intercedes and prevents a gun-fight. Later, Leonard is killed by Constance when he refuses to pay her for her part in the scheme. The townspeople suspect Neal of the murder and prepare to lynch him. Ann, who by this time had fallen in love with Neal, protests his innocence and wins some of the townspeople to her side. The miners stage a free-for-all battle, during which a lamp overturns and the casino burns to the ground. Surveying the ruins, Ann and Neal plan to build another casino together.

M. Coates Webster wrote the screen play, Irving Briskin produced it, and William Castle directed it.

Not for children or for Sunday showings in small towns.

"Moonlight in Vermont" with Gloria Jean, George Dolenz and Fay Helm

(Universal, Dec. 24; time, 62 min.)

Where previous Universal program musicals featuring youthful players have gone over, this, too, should prove acceptable. The story, which deals with the trials and tribulations of a Vermont farm girl working her way through a drama school, is extremely thin, and it serves merely as a framework for the numerous musical interludes, which are of the peppy variety. Gloria Jean, who is maturing gracefully, sings several songs in her usual good voice. It is the sort of entertainment that should be enjoyed by the younger set, because of the youthful doings and the popular "jive" music:—

Gloria Jean, a Vermont farm girl, enrolls in a New York drama school, where she works as a waitress to help pay her tuition fee. She wins the attention of Ray Lynn, a student, thus arousing the jealousy of Vivian Austin, Lynn's girl-friend. Fay Helm, Gloria's singing teacher from Vermont, visits the school and is mistaken by George Dolenz, the school's director as an applicant for a secretarial position. He puts her to work and falls in love with her. Gloria is compelled to leave school when Russell Simpson, her uncle, is faced with ruin because of a labor shortage on his farm. Fay, believing that Dolenz is interested in her only for her efficiency, returns to Vermont with Gloria. To help Gloria return to her studies, her school chums volunteer to assist her uncle in harvesting the crop. Dolenz, in order to be near Fay, accompanies the students to the farm. Although helped greatly by the youngsters, Simpson is financially unable to send Gloria back to school. Moreover, he was prejudiced against her theatrical career. Gloria, to obtain the necessary funds, enters her pet cow in a live stock show. Vivian steals the cow and tries to hide it, but one of the students finds it and brings it to the show in time to win a \$500 prize, enabling Gloria to resume her studies. Fay and Dolenz plan to marry.

Eugene Conrad wrote the screen play, Bernard W. Burton produced it, and Stacy Keach directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Swingtime Johnny" with the Andrews Sisters and Harriet Hilliard

(Universal, Feb. 4; time, 60 min.)

"Jitterbug-minded" youngsters will probably enjoy this program comedy with music, for in it appear the Andrews Sisters and Mitch Ayres and his orchestra, who are quite popular with the "swing" fans. Aside from the musical numbers, which are plentiful, there is little to recommend in it, for the story is lightweight, the treatment is routine, and the performances are just passable. Here and there it has some amusing comedy bits. Harriet Hilliard sings several popular songs quite well:—

Learning that his plant's machinery is suited to the manufacture of shell casings, Peter Cookson, prissy young president of a pipe organ company, decides to convert to war work. He hires Tim Ryan, a slipper promoter, to supervise the plant's change-over. The Andrews Sisters, Harriet Hilliard, a singer, and the members of Mitch Ayres' orchestra decide to disband their musical organization to work in Cookson's plant. Harriet becomes Cookson's private secretary and falls in love with him, but the young man's restraint forestalls any romantic tendencies on his part. Plans are formed to celebrate the company's fiftieth anniversary with a party for the employees. Meanwhile Ryan, who sought to gain control of the company, pronounces as faulty the first batch of shell casings to come off the production line; he induces the company's board of directors to sell the plant to another concern. Determined to help Cookson, Harriet induces Ryan to take her to dinner in the hope that she will secure information to uncover his crafty activities.

Having learned what she wanted to know from Ryan, Harriet locates Cookson and together they go to the plant. Roaming through the factory with Harriet, Cookson accidentally strikes a shell casing, and the clear musical tone indicates to him that the tube is perfect; a flaw in the casing would have caused it to sound either sharp or flat. The discovery enables Cookson to discredit Ryan, and the sale of the company is cancelled. Later, at the anniversary party, Cookson drops his cold reserve and declares his love for Harriet.

Clyde Bruckman wrote the screen play, Warren Wilson produced it, and Edward F. Cline directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Destination Tokyo" with Cary Grant and John Garfield

(Warner Bros., Feb. 1; time, 135 min.)

Very good! "Destination Tokyo" takes its place among the better and more sincere war pictures to come out of Hollywood. Obviously taking its cue from the factual exploits of the U. S. submarine that lay off the coast of Japan for several months, the story, in terms of fiction, ties in the submarine's daring with Doolittle's bombing of Tokyo. It is a simple but stirring tale, depicted realistically; it is void of "phoneyess," which detracts from the sincerity of many a good war film. A great part of the action takes place within the submarine's interior and life aboard the sub has been depicted interestingly. The camaraderie between the crew members, the captain's informal attitude towards his men and his deep understanding of their individual emotions, give the film many heart-warming, as well as humorous, moments. While there are individual acts of heroism here and there, it is the heroism of the crew as a whole rather than as individuals that is brought out.

The story revolves around the submarine U.S.S. Copperfin, which sails from San Francisco with orders to enter Tokyo Bay, for the purpose of obtaining data on the weather and on shore installations. This information was to be radioed to the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Hornet, from which American bombers were to launch an attack on Tokyo.

The perils encountered by the crew as they carry through their assignment are thrilling and filled with suspense. A highly dramatic sequence is the one in which the submarine lies helpless for hours, undergoing a terrific battering from depth charges dropped by Jap destroyers, which had discovered its presence in the bay. It is in these scenes that the film reaches its height in tenseness and excitement, for the men, honestly scared, await death momentarily. Other highlights that are as tense are the submarine's following a damaged Jap cruiser through the minefields and slipping into the bay as the submarine net is opened to allow the warship to pass; the unscrewing of a detonator cap from an unexploded bomb that had ripped through the submarine's deck platform; an emergency appendectomy performed by a youthful pharmacist's mate, while a crew member reads aloud instructions from a medical book, the setting up of a hidden radio station and weather observation post on the Japanese coast; and the torpedoing of Jap warships as they race out of the harbor to elude the American bombing planes.

Cary Grant gives an excellent performance as the captain, playing the role with proper restraint and warmth. John Garfield, as the torpedo man; Alan Hale, as the cook; John Ridgley, as the meteorologist; John Forsythe, as the radio man; Robert Hutton, as the youngest crew member; and William Prince, as the pharmacist's mate, do very well with their individual roles. The photography and the special effects rate high honors.

Delmar Daves and Albert Maltz wrote the screen play from an original story by Steve Fisher. Jerry Wald produced it, and Mr. Daves directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Career Girl" with Frances Langford, Edward Norris and Iris Adrian

(PRC, Jan. 4; time, 67 min.)

Given better than average production values this program musical compares favorably with similar type pictures produced by the larger companies, in spite of the fact that the story is unoriginal and the action is slow; it should get by as a supporting feature in most situations. Moreover, Frances Langford's radio popularity, and the wide publicity she received on her recent tour of the fighting fronts, should be of considerable help at the box-office. One's interest is held mainly because of the sympathy one feels for Miss Langford, who enacts the role of a stage-struck girl seeking a career on Broadway. The music is pleasant:—

As her finances shrink after weeks of unsuccessful effort to secure a theatrical engagement, Frances Langford takes lodging at a modest theatrical hotel for women. Craig Woods, a smug young executive, to whom she was engaged, urges Frances to give up her career and to return to Kansas City, but she determines to make a name for herself. Frances meets Edward Norris, a handsome playboy, and falls in love with him. Norris, however, does not realize it. Frances eventually finds herself without funds and decides to return home to marry Woods. But the girls at the hotel, realizing that Frances had real talent, dissuade her. They form a company called "Talent, Inc.," and each contributes from her meagre resources to finance a publicity campaign to put Frances across. Iris Adrian, one of the girls, convinces two shoe-string producers that they can produce a smash hit with Joan without investing too much money. Meanwhile Wood who still wanted Frances to give up her career, seeks Norris' aid. Norris watches a rehearsal of the show and realizes that it is a hit. He so informs Wood. The young executive buys the show, planning to close it and thus compel Frances to return with him to Kansas City. Wood, however, comes to the realization that Frances loves Norris, and decides to let the play go on. On opening night, Frances is acclaimed by the public.

Sam Neuman wrote the screen play, Jack Schwarz produced it, and Wallace W. Fox directed it.

Morally suitable for all.

"Whispering Footsteps" with John Hubbard and Rita Quigley

(Republic, Dec. 30; time, 56 min.)

Moderately engrossing program fare. The story idea behind this murder mystery melodrama is good, but it is weakened by an arbitrary ending, leaving the spectator disappointed. The action revolves around a young small-town bank clerk who, because he fits the description of a maniacal murderer, finds himself suspected of murder solely on the basis of circumstantial evidence. One is kept guessing all the way through trying to figure out the murderer's identity, for that reason one is let down when the murderer is revealed as a complete outsider:—

Returning to his boarding house after a two weeks' vacation, John Hubbard, a bank clerk, learns from a radio broadcast that a girl had been murdered in the district from which he had just come and that the description of the murderer fitted him exactly. Hubbard's friends begin to suspect that he may be the murderer when Cy Kendall, a special investigator, arrives in town and questions Hubbard as to his whereabouts on the night of the murder. While this suspicion simmers against him, Hubbard cynically watches Charles Halton, the bank president, carry on an affair with Joan Blair, a voluptuous blonde. Joan is attracted to Hubbard, but the bank clerk, uninterested, tries to make her give up the affair, in order that Halton's wife and daughter (Rita Quigley), who had always admired Hubbard, would not suffer from Halton's philanderings. Feeling against Hubbard grows when two more girls are murdered under circumstances that indicate his guilt. But each of these times that a girl had been found strangled, Hubbard finds himself cleared by the false alibi of some woman who had been attracted to him. A

fourth murder, that of Joan Blair's, indicates that Hubbard is unquestionably guilty. This time, however, Halton's daughter lies to save him. Tired of the accusations, Hubbard rebels when Halton threatens to reveal that his daughter had lied. He in turn threatens to reveal that the love affair he had been having with Joan might have provided the motive for her murder. This rebellion cures Hubbard of his fear of facing people. He is cleared of suspicion, however, when the real murderer, a factory hand in a town nearby, confesses. Tired of the small town and its people, Hubbard leaves to seek a new future.

Gertrude Walker and Dane Lussier wrote the screen play, George Blair produced it, and Howard Bretherton directed it.

There are no objectionable situations.

"A Guy Named Joe" with Spencer Tracy and Irene Dunne

(MGM, no release date set; time, 120 min.)

Drawing on the same idea that he used in "Here Comes Mr. Jordan," producer Everett Riskin has utilized the idea with very good results in this stirring drama of fighting pilots. Based on the belief that aviators do not die, but return to earth to guide those who carry on, the story is a combination of romance, comedy, and war action, developed in a manner that will please, not only the rank-and-file, but also class audiences. It has been given a fine production, and is performed skillfully by a competent cast. The devotion between Irene Dunne and Spencer Tracy, and her grief over his untimely death, should strike a responsive chord in women. As far as men are concerned, the spectacular air battle sequences should prove thrilling. The aerial photography is breath-taking. As was the case with the "Jordan" picture, it is best for one to see the picture from the beginning in order that one may understand what it is all about. The popularity of the leading players should assure strong box-office results:—

Because he considers the daredevil tactics of Pilots Spencer Tracy and Ward Bond a menace to the discipline and safety of the other fliers, Lt. Col. James Gleason arranges for them to be transferred to Scotland for tame reconnaissance duty. Tracy is displeased for having been taken out of fighting action, and is even more irritated because of his inability to romance with Irene Dunne, a Ferry Command pilot, who was stationed at his old field. Irene visits Tracy and, because of an intuition that he faced death, makes him promise to return to the United States as an instructor. As Tracy agrees, Bond enters with news that a Nazi carrier threatened the safety of an American convoy. Tracy is ordered to locate the carrier and radio its position. Once in the air, however, his fighting instinct gets the better of him and he dives for the carrier destroying it. He loses his life in the effort. Tracy finds himself on a huge flying field, where he meets Barry Nelson, an old pilot-friend, who had died months previously. Nelson takes Tracy to Lionel Barrymore, "General" of the dead pilots. Barrymore explains that pilots never die, and that it is their duty to help train young pilots to carry on the traditions of the air. Tracy returns to earth and is assigned to guide Van Johnson, a wealthy recruit. Though Tracy mingles with the pilots he cannot be seen or heard by them. Under his invisible guidance, Johnson becomes an ace flier. He is transferred to New Guinea, where he meets and falls in love with Irene. Tracy watches Irene's reactions and realizes that her love for him was still so strong that she could not bring herself to marry Johnson. Learning that Johnson had been assigned to demolish a Japanese munitions dump, Irene, fearing that he would meet with death, steals his plane and heads for the target. Guided by the invisible Tracy, Irene successfully completes the mission and returns safely. Tracy realizing that Irene should continue life as a normal woman, influences her to marry Johnson.

Dalton Trumbo wrote the screen play, and Victor Fleming directed it. The cast includes Esther Williams, Henry O'Neill, Charles Smith and others.

Morally suitable for all.

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